Liberty

MARCH 18, 1944 10c

Book: THE OLD BATTLE-AX
A Mystery with a New Twist

We Handle Hirohito Gently—Why?
BY BURNET HERSHEY

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Yes, *smiling!* For even their smiles have the best of care. Today, in classrooms all over the land, youngsters are being taught a lesson many parents have yet to learn—the importance of firm, healthy gums to bright teeth and sparkling smiles.

These young Americans know that today's soft foods rob our gums of the natural work and stimulation they need for health. They know why gums tend to become soft, tender . . . often signal their sensitiveness with a warning tinge of "pink" on the tooth brush!

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He may simply tell you that your gums have become tender because of today's soft, creamy foods. And, like so many dentists do today, he may very likely suggest "the helpful stimulation of Ipana and massage."

For Ipana Tooth Paste is designed not only to clean teeth thoroughly but, with massage, to aid the health of the gums as well. So massage a little extra Ipana onto your gums every time you brush your teeth. Circulation increases within the gums—helping them to healthier firmness.

Adopt the modern dental routine of Ipana and massage—for firmer gums, brighter teeth, a more sparkling smile!

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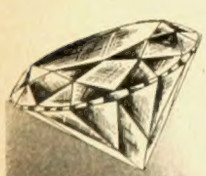

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★ VOX POP ★

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REBEL

PARMA, OHIO—Read your article on Income Tax Return Mess (January 1 Liberty). Agree heartily. What would

stop us all from returning forms to Washington and demanding simple, sensible ones? Pronto!—*Ernie Keith.*

INFORMATION PLEASE?

NAPA, CALIF.—A short time ago Washington informed us that if General MacArthur permitted his name to be used as a candidate for President, Army rules and regulations would require that he resign from the Army. Does this rule apply also to the commander in chief? Or does it?—*E. M. Fenton.*

POLITICIANS' CORNER

FLEET POST OFFICE, NEW YORK—In regard to C. B. Sturgeon's letter in February 5 Vox Pop, I want to say that any one who thinks F. D. R. and Wallace are stooges must be either a nitwit or a moron. F. D. R. and Wallace know exactly what is going on in this country and overseas.

In my opinion, Sturgeon is a left-over Willkie fan.—*Eugene Carles, S2/c U. S. N.*

SEATTLE, WASH.—C. B. Sturgeon makes me boil. So he has three sons overseas going through the hell of war. So what? Hasn't our President four sons and a son-in-law going through the same hell?

I don't believe it fair to say our chief wants to keep our boys, along with his, "out there." If it hadn't been for the "nitwits" in office before Roosevelt we might never have had to go through such a war.

There now—I feel better. Grrrrr!—*(Mrs.) Sue Thompson.*

COHOES, N. Y.—President Roosevelt has already been in the White House much too long. Two terms are enough for any President.

There are other men who are just as competent and able to run the country, even in wartimes. In the last election campaign President Roosevelt promised that our boys would never, "under any conditions," fight again on foreign soil. Has he kept that promise? The answer speaks for itself. My brother, your sons, husbands, and sweethearts are all away.

Let's not be fooled again. Remember, it is a lot easier to give a man too much power than it is to take it away, once he has it.

Think it over, folks.—*Ellen E. Stewart.*

DREAMBOAT DEPARTMENT

REVERE, MASS.—I wish to congratulate and thank you for that swell article and picture of Our Ideal, the Voice, Sinatra, the Super-Crooner! (February 12 Liberty.)

To us who idolize him, that sweet little live doll is going Higher and Higher—and getting a write-up in Liberty is helping to prove that.

When "Papa" Sinatra was in Boston, I chanced to touch "the Dream's" hand and talk to him for about two minutes.

After that, I don't see how any one could help adoring This Love of Mine.

Now you're probably wondering whether I'm a moron or not, because only morons are supposed to like "Mr. Cinderella." Well, I'm not. I've studied

music now for seven years and I feel I should know whether or not anything (musical) is good.

Of course Bing "the Groaner" Crosby is tops—that is understood. But "the doll" is a good challenge, don't you agree, even a little? Very Sinatrally yours—*Shirley Primack.*

THE PITY OF IT

c/o POSTMASTER, SEATTLE, WASH.—In January 1 Liberty I read a letter written from Los Angeles by Pfc. Daniel O'Neill. My heart really goes out to this poor soul. I really think the people ought to be ashamed of themselves for

keeping this poor boy from making a phone call. I don't see how he stands life like that.

I'm sure glad I'm not in such a bad place. My outfit has been overseas twenty-four months, and in this short time we haven't seen a woman, town, or village. I'm sure glad we don't have to put up with those cruel old civilians. —*Pfc. William Beaver.*

NOW WE ARE STUMPED

SOMEWHERE IN THE PACIFIC—In January 1 Vox Pop I read that Richard B. Raab, C. A. Ashby, Mrs. L. F. Burrington, and several others don't want war stories and articles to appear in Liberty.

By all means, Dear Editor, spare them the horror of this war. Let them turn their heads and share not in

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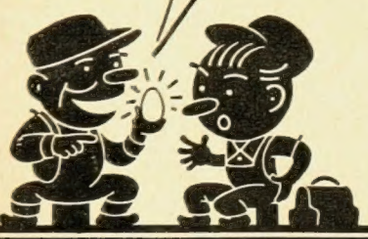

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Brown and Yellow
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what's happening. We are just giving our lives for them, so for some of us soldiers give us just a few war stories and articles, eh? We appreciate what the other guys are doing, if some civilians don't. Liberty gets through over here, and it is tops.—*Pfc. C. A. Phillips.*

CASPER, WYO.—I am in perfect accordance with your readers who suggest you have more cartoons, fiction, etc., than war stories. Why constantly drum into people's heads the horrors of war, et cetera? The people of America know there's a war going on—why remind them of it with a lot of blood-and-thunder stories, true or not?

Lighten the load with gay stories such as Charles Bonner's Give My Love to Everybody in February 12 Liberty, and more cartoons by that mad human Partch.

Yes, I know whereof I speak. I have just returned from the African theater after having been on fifty-five combat missions over enemy territory. Tell all those soldiers stationed over here to stop the baloney about hearing war stories. They're whistling in the dark. —*T/Sgt. William Teets.*

WHAT'S WITH THE MALE POPULATION?

BUFFALO, N. Y.—I want to thank you for that article on Frank Sinatra, though, as one who knows, I can safely say that Earl Wilson isn't the only male fan Sinatra has.

I enjoy articles on stage, screen, and radio favorites as long as you don't have too many, but please keep Grable out of them. I don't especially dislike

Betty, but all you hear from the male population around here is Grable, Grable, Grable. It's not that I'm prejudiced against pin-ups because I'm a female, since I think Turner and Goddard, among others, are worth pinning up. But after seeing Coney Island twice (at my date's request) I still say, "What's with Grable?"—*Bonnie.*

SHANEANIGANS

DENTON, TEX.—I just saw a letter from Mrs. S. Howe (February 12 Vox Pop) on taking out the Cockeyed Puzzle. Please don't do it. If they are too hard for Mrs. Howe, there is always the Quizzical one to work. I started buying Liberty for the puzzle. Now I buy it for the good reading *and* the puzzle.—(*Mrs.*) *T. V. Steagall.*

BLUEFIELD, W. VA.—I call your attention to the fact that your Cockeyed Crossword Puzzles are no longer attractive to the majority of the readers of your publication, especially since every one worth while is bowed down with heavy duties incident to the war effort and doesn't have the time to spend. You once had attractive puzzles every other week, and people would enjoy a few minutes working on them, but you have discontinued this.

I shall not renew my subscription when it is out unless you return to your old practice. Think it over.—*S. N. Worley.*

THE WHITE BRIGADE
By Robert Goffin
Liberty's Book Condensation

On the day Belgium surrendered, the Belgians began to fight just as fiercely underground. To combat Germany's reign of terror under the Black Brigade, they organized a White Brigade of loyal Belgians.

This is their story—of how they fought back at tyranny. It is packed with more action, more intrigue, more drama than any writer would dare put into a book if it weren't *true.*

HOW FREE IS FREE ENTERPRISE?
By the Hon. Harold L. Ickes, Secretary of the Interior

Mr. Ickes, who has never been noted for pulling his punches, tells what business must do to keep us all working. Most business men will agree with him too—though probably not in these words.

THE INVISIBLE COLONEL
By John Dos Passos

Chicago is the center of Isolationist thinking—and Colonel Robert R. McCormick, publisher of the "World's Greatest Newspaper," is its prophet. Here's how he pulls the strings—and why.

NEW TACTICS IN SEA WAR
By Sidney Shalett

Air power has brought major changes in the grouping and use of warships. With the carrier the queen of the seas, our new fighting line-up is devastating.

HI-YO, SILVER, AWA-A-A-Y
By Robert Copeland

Out of the trembling ether come the thundering hoofs of the great horse Silver—also his boss, the Lone Ranger, hero to millions, young and old. Here's a close-up of "the masked man of justice."

MIRACLES OF MICROFILM
By Lowell Brentano

V-mail is only one example of microfilm in action. The war has also brought about a revolution in storing records and shipping printed matter around the world.

HE WANTS TO FLY
By Rita Weiman

In all the years they had been separated there was just one thing that linked the lives of Fred and Isabel—their growing son. Then a crisis in his life brought one in theirs, too.

JUST BETWEEN OURSELVES

AFTER BEING A PAGE in the U. S. Senate, a newspaper reporter, and "one of Thurman Arnold's boys" in the Department of Justice, Stanley Disney volunteered for the Army in March, 1942, and was assigned to A-15-5 at the Field Artillery Replacement Center, Fort Bragg. Six weeks later he was a casualty of the campaign of the obstacle course, which he thinks is the worst in the Army. But then all soldiers claim the same for their obstacle courses. Eleven months a private, Stanley was commissioned a second looey in the Tax Amortization Branch, S. O. S., Washington, D. C. It was the fall over the obstacle course, he says, that provided him with a portable in the hospital, instead of a howitzer, and resulted in his Night of March 15 in this issue. So it was an ill wind, etc.

HER FIRST GO at a public career was as a pianist, then Muriel Bruce drifted into the educational motion-picture business, and wound up in the newspaper syndicate field, where she began by writing a daily sonnet! She's Canadian, but married to an American. "My husband," she writes, "is an officer in the Army Air Forces, stationed at the locale of my Liberty story, a dry and dreadful spot in the Southwest, where I spent last summer as an Army wife." She likes to play chess and to cook. Flying is her idea of ideal action, but her chief hobby is one of the strangest: Cycle research.

WHEN YOU COME UPON The Old Battle-Ax in these pages, you will recall that Elisabeth Sanxay Holding, Brooklyn-born, has had many of her exciting stories in our magazine, some as far back as 1928. But it's been several years since we've had the pleasure of giving you one of her yarns. As a chiller-diller concocter of murder mystery she's a wow. Isn't she?

THE EDITORS.

AUTO-LITE SPARK PLUGS

IN SERVICE ON EVERY FRONT

"Gran'paw's jinin-up — sez you gotta fight skunks with skunks."

JOIN UP FOR THE WAR ON GAS WASTE

One big gun in the war on gas waste is Auto-Lite's "Plug-Chek" Inspection Service. For you may increase your gas mileage as much as 12% with Auto-Lite's "Plug-Chek," according to tests conducted by the American Automobile Association. As simple an operation as cleaning and regapping your present spark plugs may be all that is necessary. If you need new plugs, insist on ignition engineered Auto-Lite's. Get a "Plug-Chek" at your dealer's.

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Tune in AUTO-LITE'S GREAT RADIO SHOW
Starring RONALD COLMAN In
"EVERYTHING FOR THE BOYS"
Featuring men and women at the fighting fronts
Tuesday Night NBC Network

It's reassuring to find the things that live on, because they are *good*. Imported Mediterranean briar is one of those things—the perfect pipe material. We proudly offer it, as we did before the war, in a pipe produced by the same craftsmen of LHS, with the same solid rubber bit, sterling silver band and all.

Makers of famous LHS Ultra-fine $10 Purex Pipes $1.50, $3.50

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Bills Paid UP TO $510.00 for EACH One in Your Family

Total paid for 2 persons, up to $1,020.00; for 3 persons, up to $1,530.00, etc. Many extra, unusual benefits included.

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When sudden sickness or accident strikes, you or anyone in your family can use any hospital you select and any doctor. This Policy pays the many expenses as clearly explained by the Policy in simple, straightforward language. Pays hospital and surgical bills for sicknesses, accidents, and operations, and even makes special provisions for *Childbirth*. No medical examination necessary. Issued at special family rates. Also available to individuals for a bit more. Mail coupon TODAY. No agent will call.

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HARRIS & EWING PHOTO

Chester Bowles and the public work together to stem inflation.

Keep It Up, You're Doing Fine!

We're doing a swell job of keeping the lid on inflation—at least, so far, says OPA's head man. He wants us to keep it up

BY CHESTER BOWLES

Administrator, Office of Price Administration

THE American people are earning more money, right now, than ever before in the nation's history. And they are *saving* a larger percentage of that money than ever before.

This confounds those who are always worrying about how extravagant people would be if they had any surplus money over their bare living expenses. But the plain truth is, the average American family is being provident in a big way today.

One of the reasons they can be provident though "flush" is that two years ago the Congress passed the Emergency Price Control Act, which empowered the OPA, in order to forestall the financial suffering and hardship which have accompanied and followed every war in which the American people have ever participated.

Let's consider, for a moment, how much chance for thrift there would be *without* the OPA to control prices and keep down the cost of living.

More than half the wage earners of the United States are engaged in war production. But war workers' income cannot be spent for war materials. They do not buy the tanks, planes, ships, and guns they help to make. Nor can the worker on civilian goods buy a jeep or an antiaircraft gun for use around the house.

So all the earnings of *all* producers can go only into "civilian goods"—clothes, food, housing, and luxuries. And because of concentration on war production there are not enough of these civilian goods to go around.

Statisticians estimate that the country's income in 1943 was about $142,000,000,000. On that income the people of the United States paid about eighteen billions in federal taxes. That left $124,000,000,000 available for spendings and savings.

But the amount of goods—consumer goods, civilian goods—which was pro-

(*Continued on page 13*)

There is only one source of this distinguished whiskey, and that is the **OLD TAYLOR** Distillery in Kentucky. The best evidence of this whiskey's quality is the fact that demand now far exceeds supply.

This signature on every bottle is your guide to the genuine **OLD TAYLOR**.

Signed
SEALED *and*
DELICIOUS

PLEASE BE PATIENT. We're doing our best to spread our prewar stocks of **OLD TAYLOR** fairly—as we're now engaged in war production of alcohol.

National Distillers Products Corp., N. Y.

ESTABLISHED BY

E. H. Taylor Jr. & Sons

ON THE BEAM

BY WAYNE PARRISH

Aptly named Bataan as a grim reminder of the historic battle, this Boeing Flying Fortress is used by General MacArthur to visit the battle fronts.

Weather Report

One important item in the world air operations of the Army Air Forces which you've probably thought very little about is the very big problem of weather reporting. In the United States we take weather forecasting and reporting as a matter of course. But no other area in the world is so well covered as our own country. Many areas simply have no weather reporting stations at all—or didn't have until our Army installed them.

Long-range forecasts play a very vital role in many types of combat as well as transport operations. By developing research procedures and collecting available records, weather forecasts can now be made forty-eight hours, or ten days, or thirty days in advance with sufficient accuracy to permit of making preparatory plans for future operations. On a recent raid on Norway our bombers knew by weather forecasts that they would be protected by a cloud cover almost all the way to the target but that the target itself would be just out of the cloud area and easy meat for high-altitude precision bombing.

The A. A. F. weather service is now world-wide. That means that our own personnel are stationed in many far-away spots, often isolated for many months at a time. But all of the data are collected, studied, and distributed to the vast operations from England to Africa, the Middle East, South America, Australia, China, and Alaska, to name some of the major centers.

Magic Lantern

A young pilot returning from his first mission over enemy-occupied Europe was asked by his operations officer if he had had any difficulty in recognizing the target.

"I should say not," he replied quickly. "I had just left it an hour ago—back on the sand table."

The target was the power plant at Ijmuiden, Holland, and the attack introduced the Martin Marauder (B-26) into the European theater.

The sand table was a reproduction of the power plant made from photographs according to scale, the first of many that have been used by medium bombardment groups of the Eighth Air Force Air Support Command with great success in the briefing of crews engaged in combat missions.

The man responsible for the development and utilization of the sand-table principle is Major Alfred H. von Kolnitz of Charleston, South Carolina.

Heavy bombers flying at high altitude can use aerial photographs and maps to locate targets, but these aids are not useful enough for low-level flying. Church steeples, water towers, and other obstructions do not show up on maps. So a method was worked out wherein the vertical photo of the target area is projected upon an upturned table by means of an epidiascope or other projecting machine, and all the lines of rivers, canals, buildings, fields and wooded areas, etc., are chalked in. After the table is returned to its normal position the lines are filled in with a variety of materials.

Pilots spend much time studying the sand table, then take off, and within a few minutes they are over the actual target area itself.

The Rope Tightens

Ever since the Japs moved south and captured Singapore and other areas in the South Pacific, there has been one gap in the world-wide network of air services. That has been the hop between Australia and India. Occasionally Army planes made the long flight, but not as a regular practice. The distance was too great.

But British Overseas Airways Corporation has reopened the connection. Not many passengers can be carried, but the world link is again complete. Of course the ferrying of military airplanes to Russia by way of Alaska, revealed not so long ago, has actually kept the air link technically open, but this route is not for passengers or mails. Our own Air Transport Command does not yet fly all the way around the world, but can be expected to do so as the war on the Japs intensifies and some of the conquered area is taken back. The A. T. C. flies west to Australia, and east to Chungking, China.

Paint versus Speed

You're going to see many more bright and shiny airplanes in the skies from now on. Almost all aircraft will roll off the assembly lines a metal color on new Army Air Forces orders.

Removal of greenish-gray war paint from almost all of its aircraft will give its planes several miles an hour additional speed and will result in a substantial reduction in weight. The action was taken upon recommendations of combat commanders.

Only specialized planes overseas will retain their camouflage where tactical considerations require it in combat zones.

Leaving off the paint will save fifteen to twenty pounds of weight on fighters and seventy to eighty pounds on heavy bombardment types.

This relatively small amount of weight may not seem important, but actually it adds miles to a flight. Even a thin coating of paint has a slightly retarding influence on speed.

The Stuff of Heroes

A four-engined Liberator bomber on one of the Paramushiru bombing missions last fall was attacked simultaneously by two Jap Zeros. The tail section of the B-24 broke completely away from the rest of the plane when it crashed, but the tail section remained afloat momentarily.

As Jap strafers swept the scene, the tail gunner continued a steady stream of fire until his dismembered compartment went out of sight under the water.

Such is the stuff of which our bomber crews are made.

The man behind the gun was Staff Sergeant Ben P. Colecchi, son of Mr. B. Colecchi, New Castle, Pennsylvania, now listed as "missing in action." By order of Major General Davenport Johnson, commanding general of the Eleventh Air Force, based in Alaska, he has been awarded the Air Medal.

Odds and Ends

German heavy flak (antiaircraft fire) can reach above 40,000 feet, but its accuracy drops off 50 per cent every 5,000 feet above 15,000 feet.

In one war theater the typical Boeing B-17 Flying Fortress is at present in operation 231 days before it is lost in combat or damaged mechanically so that it is torn down and used to rebuild other B-17s.

(*Continued from page 10*)
duced in 1943 was approximately $90,000,000,000. In terms of the "average family"—and yours is one of them—that means there's about twelve dollars to spend for each nine dollars' worth of goods it's possible to buy.

Now, imagine what would happen to the price of that nine dollars' worth of goods if there were no ceilings and no rationing.

Remember how your rents began to climb before the OPA stepped in to control them? Remember the sugar, coffee, and shoe queues that formed before rationing began? Recall the shelves bare of canned goods until the OPA gave you a coupon book that guaranteed you your fair share? Recollect the meat counters with nothing but scrapple on them—and very little of that? How much of your income would you be able to save if that kind of market had continued?

Perhaps you figure that there would have been a limit to prices without ceilings; that when the price of nine dollars' worth of goods available for your family reached the twelve dollars you had to spend for them, that would be the top, because that price would absorb all the money. But an inflationary market doesn't work that way, and never has worked that way.

WHEN people find that all their earnings are required for bare living costs, with no margin for savings, they naturally demand higher pay. And that higher pay increases again the cost of what they want to buy and, therefore, the price you have to pay for it. Economists call that process the "inflationary spiral," and the phrase is apt. It is an upward whirl that makes both economists and laymen dizzy.

Such an "inflationary spiral" boosted prices over 100 per cent in the last World War. So far in this war we have managed to keep prices out of any such stratospheric heights. Thanks to OPA and its price ceilings, rent controls, and ration books, the average family has money to save, and is saving it.

Yet even those savings contain a threat of inflation so long as they are in spendable form—as "loose money" or in commercial bank accounts. That is why the government urges you to put every "extra" cent you have into war bonds. You are asked to do this as a patriotic contribution to the war effort, as a sound investment, and as a means of combating inflation—since money in war bonds exerts no upward pressure on prices.

Money put in savings accounts and life insurance is also anti-inflationary, because it is out of the market for scarce goods.

Yes, you as an average American have done a good job in fighting inflation, without being aware you were in the battle. On the whole, you've been a good sport about observing ration rules and avoiding black markets. You've been economical in your spending and lavish in your saving, and if you keep that up we won't have any real inflation.

But don't think it isn't your personal concern and your continuing responsibility. You as an individual—the ultimate consumer—either make inflation or check it. You as an individual will suffer if inflation comes, no matter who you are or what your job is.

So make your tens and twenties behave and the billions will take care of themselves.

THE END

Inexpensive "L" Landing Strip on Edge of Town, Illustrated.

Rosedale is a small town, but it is progressive. Already it has built its airplane landing strip—for the convenience of its own and other post-war fliers.

The mayor realizes that the coming air age is nearly here, that forty-eight local boys in the Air Force and three local girls in the WAFS will want to fly after Victory. Also, he knows that everyone is air-minded and that the community with landing facilities will go ahead.

When you get your peacetime Piper Cub, you can land at Rosedale for the big county fair. And, you can go to thousands of other towns, take vacation and business trips with ease, pleasure, safety and economy.

But, will you be able to take-off from your own town? For the convenience of its citizens and for its future, your town should plan inexpensive landing facilities now. A new booklet, "What Your Town Needs for the Coming Air Age", gives the why, where and how of building local landing facilities. For your free copy, write Piper Aircraft Corporation, Dept. LB34W, Lock Haven, Pennsylvania

GET YOUR AVIATION BOOKLET—"Piper Cub In War and In Peace." Full color, 32 pages. Covers history of light plane, Piper Cub planes, coming air age, how to fly. Enclose 10c in stamps or coin for postage-handling. Write Piper Aircraft Corporation, Department LB34, Lock Haven, Pennsylvania.

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AMERICA'S NEW FAVORITE

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From East to West there is a tremendous demand for Blatz.

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There are many good reasons... you'll discover them by trying Blatz. That's all we ask...and Blatz Beer is all you could ask for... in enjoyment and distinctive Good Taste.

Enjoy a bottle today—know why Blatz is fast becoming America's new favorite!

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In our 93rd year

MILWAUKEE'S MOST EXQUISITE BEER

Buy
War Bonds

NOTICE
The prompt return of
ALL EMPTY BEER BOTTLES
to your source of supply
is urgently requested

Liberty
THE MAGAZINE OF A FREE PEOPLE

Emperor and War Lord—Hirohito receives homage from Tojo. Do they share equal guilt for hideous crimes of Japanese military?

WE HANDLE HIROHITO GENTLY—WHY?

BY BURNET HERSHEY

The Allies are tabbing war criminals for trial, but the Japanese emperor seems exempt. Americans ask bitterly, "Why?" An ace reporter explains

WAR criminals have already been tried, condemned, and hanged in Russia. War criminals are scheduled for like treatment by all the other Allied nations as territory is recovered and law and decency are restored. Lists have been prepared and indictments drawn up naming the criminals. Special international courts are being organized to pass judgment. It remains for the accused to be seized.

But nowhere in these indictments or on any of these lists does the name of Hirohito appear. The Japanese emperor seems to be exempt even from the accusation of responsibility for the innumerable crimes committed in his name by Japanese soldiers, sailors, and civilians.

Alone among the leaders of the Axis nations, the head man of Japan seems destined to escape the punishment we are determined to visit on his confederates. He is not even named in official or newspaper propaganda as the personification of his country, as are Hitler and Mussolini. Instead, his creature, General Hideki Tojo, the Japanese premier, is the scapegoat.

All this has confused and irritated a lot of plain Americans who see no sense in protecting an emperor whose inhuman subordinates of high rank organized and supervised the tortures and murders of interned civilians and prisoners of war. Yet every precaution possible seems to have been taken by our own high command to ensure

(*Continued on page 67*)

About the last place I go is Boston's, and, would you believe it, I see this joker I am looking for.

NIGHT OF MARCH 15

BY LIEUTENANT STANLEY DISNEY

ILLUSTRATED BY FRANK GODWIN

YES, sir, Mr. Keek, you heard me right. What I said was the government paid my income tax for me, and what I want you to do is to get me a refund.

Yes, sir, I realize you are just a lawyer.

No, sir, Mr. Keek, I do not think you are a magician. And I do not expect you to work any miracles. I just want you to sue, on account of there ought to be a law or something.

Yes, sir, I will start at the beginning. And I will try to talk more slowly.

It is like this, Mr. Keek. It is last March 15, which is the day the law says you got to file your income-tax return —like I should tell you your business. Anyway, I am getting ready to file me my tax return, so I drop in the Boston Bar and order a bonecrusher, which is rye and gin mixed, Mr. Keek, and a pen and ink, on account of I figure the return will not be official if I write it in pencil.

Boasting in public sometimes leads to strange adventures, Mr. Mimble discovers in this ribtickling farce built around death and taxes

"And keep the ink out of the drink, garsong," I crack to the waiter. See, I am feeling good, Mr. Keek. Anyway, I am till I get to reading all that fine print on that sheet of paper.

Like you can see, I am strictly minding my own business, and am trying to figure out the answers to all them questions, when a hog-faced guy sits down beside me. He is chin-wrastling a big cigar and he is most careless about how he blows smoke in my face. He picks up my papers, and when I reach for them back he flicks some hot ashes in my hand.

"H'mm," he says. "Filling out your swindle sheet for Mr. Whiskers?" he says. "And you make forty bucks a week, eh, chum?" he says. Then he blows some more smoke right in my face so I got to cough. "Why do you trouble to make out a return for chicken feed like that?" he asks.

Well, this burns me up, Mr. Keek, as you can well believe, and I would gladly poke his nose right out of my business with a uppercut, only I do not see any reason to start a fight free gratis with a guy so big. And with him talking and acting that way and chewing that cigar, the money I make blowing a horn in Happy Jack's Tuneful Ten does not seem so much. In fact, he makes me ashamed it is so little, Mr. Keek. I take a drink, and then I get me an idea that is enough to make me give up having ideas from here on.

"Check, pal," I say. And I give him a wink like I am in the know. "That is all I report because that is all I make legitimate. I wouldn't bother with that small change if I didn't need a front."

I nod very wise and very mysterious, but do not think even for a second, Mr. Keek, I ever intend to deceive the government. This guy studies me close, and suddenly he bangs his fat hand down on the table so our drinks jump.

"I bet you make plenty, chum," he says. And he pokes me in the side with his elbow, and laughs. "I can tell a right guy when I see one, chum. But how do you make all that money you don't report? And how do you figure you will get away without telling Mr. Whiskers?"

I look around like I am afraid of being overheard, though, to tell you the truth, Mr. Keek, most of the time I can't get the guys in Boston's to listen to me, even when I try. I lean way over and whisper in his ear.

"I make my real dough knocking off wrong cookies," I lie. "I'm trigger man for one of the toughest gangs in the East. But, of course, I don't dare put down what I make that way."

"You better report what you make that way too, chum," he says. "Look how the government puts the Chi gang in cold storage for forgettin' to report their incomes. And look what happens to them guys in Atlantic City."

"And go to the hot squat for how I make it!" I yelp.

"Nix, chum," he says. "Wise up. Them swindle sheets are confidential so long as you put down the straight goods. Tell me, how much do you make that way?"

His voice is real respectful, Mr. Keek, and somehow I feel very important. I act like I got to study and add up.

"Oh, fifty, sixty grand," I answer.

"You sure are doing real well, chum," he says. "You cannot get more than fifty cents for knocking off most people I know around here. Say, chum," he whispers, "who did you knock off that was worth fifty G to you?"

Now, personally, Mr. Keek, I feel so good, what with all them bonecrushers I have, I mean to tell him I make that money knocking off eight or ten subjects, but if he wants a single job, it is O. K. with me. And while I am figuring who to say I job, he is figuring too, for suddenly he says, "I bet you are the torch who burns down Piggy Rocca."

WITH things like they are, Mr. Keek, knocking off one person is as good as another, so I nod yes, though I got to think a minute before I recollect who Piggy Rocca is.

"Keerect," I say. "But how did you guess I am the guy who plugs public enemy number two?"

"Public enemy number one," he snaps. He scowls and is too mad to talk for a minute. "I guess who you kill," he says at last, "because Piggy Rocca is the only man in this town, or this country, that will bring you that price."

He dips the pen in the ink and starts to write, and it is a couple of minutes before I catch on.

"Hey," I yelp, "you are not putting that down! It will break me paying taxes."

"Keep your teeth in your mouth, chum," he says. "You put it down, see? Then you deduce most of it for business expenses, see? Like you say you pay ten grand for a hide-out or for casing the job. I will take care of the expenses." He looks up at the ceiling and scratches his head with the blunt end of the pen. Suddenly he begins to shake all over like he is laughing to himself. "Let's see now," he says sort of dreamy-like. "I will put down you pay ten grand to a Mr. Tortoni for a place to hide. To a Mr. Welcome Tortoni."

I get real anxious about this.

That is not a person's real name, is it?" I ask. "For if it is, maybe he will not want us to use it too."

This fat guy looks hurt.

"What kinda heel do you think I am?" he asks. "That is just a name I make up, see? And I will make up a address, so it will look more like the real McCoy. And Cement Joe. That is another good moniker I make up. I'll write you pay him ten grand to deposit the subject in a barrel o' concrete and dump it in the river."

Well, Mr. Keek, I figure if he is having some fun, who am I to stop him, for I will not mail that return anyway. So I laugh. And he laughs back. And I take another bonecrusher, and another, and pretty soon I am sleepy, and that is all I remember, Mr. Keek, except later I recall this guy shakes me so I will wake up enough to sign some papers before he lets me go to sleep again. And the next day, Mr. Keek, what with my head feeling like it does, I do not think of my income-tax return at all.

In fact, I do not think of it for maybe two or three months, when a big guy with muscle and a little guy with specs call on me. Both of them flash badges and I see they are agents of the United States Government, so naturally I ask them to sit down to make them feel at home.

"You Joseph Egglestone Mimble?" the big agent asks.

"Mostly they call me Joe," I crack. And I grin, for I want them to like me. But I am scared, for I figure they have come to ask why I didn't file a tax return.

"Now I have seen everything," the muscle agent says. "I don't believe it," he says. "A squirt the size and build of a two-bit T-bone knocking off Piggy Rocca. Listen, you," he snaps to me. "Did you really rub out Piggy Rocca?"

"Huh?" I ask. And then I begin to remember something about the night of March 15, and I do not feel so good. That fat guy must have filed my tax return after I pass out. "Oh," I say. "Haha! I bet you want to see me about my income-tax return. That is just a gag. Heh-heh!"

"Yeh?" Muscle answers. "We are all laughing. Specially if it is true. We have been trying to collar the Piggy for two years, and the government spends I don't know how much on the job. But we got to make sure the Piggy is gone for good before we call off the hunt."

"Oh," I say.

"Well, did you?" Muscle repeats. "Did you kill Piggy Rocca? If what you say is true, you got nothing to fear, because your return is confidential. But if you are not telling the truth to the United States Government, you are in for a lot of trouble."

"Let me see again what I write." I ask.

GLASSES shows me a copy of my return, and what I read makes my hair stand on end, on account of it gives details how I claim I get paid fifty grand for killing a very tough subject named Piggy Rocca, and how I pay ten grand to a Mr. Welcome Tortoni for a hide-out, and another ten grand to some one named Cement Joe to put the body in a barrel of sidewalk and dump it in the river. There are a lot more items I never read because my eyes fill up with sweat coming down from my forehead.

I try to think up an explanation to tell them, Mr. Keek, but all I can think of is they say I am safe if my return is true. So, as you can expect, Mr. Keek, I say it is true.

"I guess that is how it happens all right, all right," I crack. I spit from the side of my mouth like I am a killer, but not much, for I know my landlady will

(*Continued on page 59*)

"H'mm," the guy says. "Filling out your swindle sheet for Mr. Whiskers?" he says.

Corporal Newcomb rests after the battle.

A wounded marine leads a charge around a barbed-wire barricade. They didn't stop.

COMBAT PHOTOG ON TARAWA

BY CORPORAL OBIE NEWCOMB, Jr., U.S.M.C., as told to James D. Horan

In the first wave with a camera! Yes, but this man was a marine first, and he also packed a rifle. Here's how he used both

AT home now, it sometimes seems hard to believe that those bloody seventy-two hours on Tarawa ever happened.

As I sit listening to the soft music of the radio or talk to mother as she moves about in the kitchen, Tarawa seems unreal. It's only at night, when I lie in bed surrounded by darkness and silence, that it comes back in all its reality. Then I see everything from the very beginning, and wonder why I am alive.

I remember the long months of training, the countless practice invasions, the secret departure. And I remember how, at the last minute, I was nearly disappointed. An officer told me my assignment was to go ashore with the reserves. I pointed out that, as a Marine Corps combat photographer, my job was to get action pictures. The battle might be over by the time the reserves reached the beach. I asked to go ashore with the first wave.

The officer raised his eyebrows. "O. K., Newcomb," he said. "First wave it is."

Five A. M. was D hour.

There we were. Less than a mile away was the beach. It was so still I could hear the groaning of the ship's plates. Not a breath of air moved across the sea. Huge motionless shadows of naval ships and transports lay on either side of us. All of us had stayed topside. I don't think any one on the ship slept that night.

I started a conversation with a young marine who lay next to me. We talked of home, our families, our girls, and the good times we had. All seemed so far away. The last thing I heard him say was, "Guess I'll get my feet wet going into this show."

Hours later I saw his body on the beach. He had been killed by a Jap sniper.

Just before dawn the naval bombardment opened up. For two hours salvo after salvo screamed toward the island, hidden in the darkness. Flaming ribbons of tracers shot across the sky. Then, like swarms of angry bees, the planes took off to strafe the island. The thunder was terrific. Some one yelled, "There's a fire!"

Now we could see the outlines of Tarawa lighted by a huge fire. The Navy had hit a munition or supply dump. Then the order, crisp and impersonal:

"Landing party away."

Lugging my camera case; rifle—even combat photographers are marines first—my pack, and extra rolls of film, I hopped into the boat. The hawsers creaked and we hit the water. First we had a rendezvous with the other boats—then in to the beach.

The heavy stuff was still hitting the island and we could hear the shells shriek across the sky.

The Japs were answering with artillery, machine-gun, and mortar fire. One ship was hit and a flash of flame shot hundreds of feet into the air. Shells splashed about our transports, and they twisted and turned frantically across the sea.

Halfway in, the Jap machine-gunners found our range. Bullets churned the water on either side of our boat and mortar shells blew up fountains directly in front of it. My heart was choking me. I looked around at the marines near me. One or two had their eyes half closed and their lips were moving. They were praying. One marine up forward called out: "Hey, boy, how about taking my picture now?"

That broke the spell. Others yelled, "Watch the birdie, guys!" and "Better use that rifle, boy—those Japs don't like to pose!"

I didn't have a chance to answer. We were passing a burning pier and a burst of machine-gun fire hit us. A boy next to me slumped over without a sound. Another slid to the bottom of the boat. Then the Japs opened with their 37-mm. cannons, and just as our boat scraped the sand a shell blew us out of the water. I felt myself go up in the air, and I came down with a crash. After a few stunned minutes I got to my feet. Some one was yelling:

"Let's get to work—let's hit 'em!"

I went over the side and landed on the beach. Smoke from the fires was terrific. Choking and half blinded, we ran crouching across the sand. From the pier on our right the sniper's nest was sending a steady line of fire at other boats coming in. Forty feet offshore a Jap freighter was burning fiercely.

"Get that guy!" some one shouted.

I looked around. A young Jap soldier was running through the shallow water. Several rifles cracked, and he stopped

No lull here. One marine hurls a grenade while his comrade slacks thirst.

Marine marksman versus pillbox sniper.

in his tracks, spun around, and fell. His body floated slowly in to the beach.

I joined several marines behind a three-foot barricade of palm logs and sand. They were firing as fast as they could pump in bullets. Suddenly one little marine yelled, "I'm going to get the machine gun on our boat!" He raced back to the wrecked landing boat. Every step he took was followed by a spurt of sand as the snipers tried to hit him. He returned in a few minutes with the gun across his shoulder.

Not more than twenty feet in front of us was a pillbox blazing with guns. It took every bit of courage I had to throw my rifle over those logs and fire. Once I ducked just in time. A Jap machine-gunner let go and sprayed us with splinters of palm log.

Now the second wave was coming in. They weren't as lucky as we were. Hundreds of feet offshore their boats were snagged on coral reefs. They had to wade waist-deep, firing as they advanced in the face of everything the Japs could hand out—machine-gun, rifle, mortar, and artillery fire. Some threw up their hands and disappeared —but the others kept coming.

Suddenly the thought struck me: Where the hell is my camera? In the excitement I had left it behind in the boat. I dropped my rifle and crawled back to a scene I'll never forget.

FIVE dead marines—one the curly-haired boy who had kidded me about taking his picture—were sprawled on the boat's bottom. It was like a blow in the stomach. All I could say was:

"Damn them—damn them—damn them!"

Near by was my camera. I picked it up and went back to the beach.

The third wave came in. Their boats, too, stuck on the coral reefs. They were sitting ducks for the Jap gunners. One boat blew up, probably a direct hit by a mortar shell. The men advancing were crouched so low in the water only the tops of their helmets showed. They looked like moving mushrooms.

The fire from the pillboxes took a deadly toll. Helmet after helmet vanished. But not one man took a backward step. Withdrawal was a forgotten word that morning on Tarawa. When they reached the beach, they charged across the sand like madmen, their rifles spitting bullets as fast as they could fire.

The Jap machine guns on the pier continued to chatter, but marines from the second wave blew them into the sea with hand grenades.

The first morning, snipers had us pinned down to the ground. You were a perfect target if you lifted your head. I had to take pictures flat on my stomach. Only a few feet from me a marine raised himself to shoot. He jerked back and fell across my back, killed instantly by a sniper bullet.

There was one man the Japs couldn't hit. He was Major Henry P. Crowe, a six-footer with a voice that could be heard to Tokyo. He stood on the beach ignoring the snipers as he pored over maps. Twenty yards to the left of the barricade was a Jap pillbox, and I heard him order: "Lieutenant, get some demolition men over here."

The pillbox was buried level with the sand and the Jap was pouring lead through a small opening. Two demolition men joined us, both smoking long cigars—not for pleasure but to light the fuses of TNT. One, a salty old marine, growled: "Come on, if you want some pictures."

They crawled toward the pillbox, and I followed. They halted within throwing distance and one taped together some yellow-papered blocks of TNT. He handed the packaged death to his partner, who touched his cigar to the fuse. It sizzled as he threw. The TNT landed squarely in the pillbox. There was a roar and the earth trembled.

But the Jap kept shooting!

Both marines cursed. The old-timer said: "Give me that fuse. I'll tear it in half so it'll practically go off in my hand." The squares were taped, the fuse was lit.

"O. K., you Jap ———!" yelled the old boy, and threw. I had my camers ready, but I never got the picture. The TNT exploded the instant it hit the pillbox. The concussion was ear-splitting. My helmet bounced off. The demolition men lost their cigars and sand flew about as if whipped up by a hurricane.

But the Jap sniper still fired!

Then the two of them grabbed the TNT and made a move to charge the pillbox. But Major Crowe called out:

"Hold your fire, men. Here are the flame-throwers."

A marine carrying a large black box on his back and holding a short hose-like affair began a crouching run toward the pillbox. On both sides riflemen kept up a rain of lead to keep the sniper away from his firing slit. Then the flame-thrower opened up. There was a loud hiss, and a jet of orange flame and greasy smoke enveloped the sniper's nest. A sharp scream, then silence. We waited. The Jap, blackened and burned, crawled out and started to run. Shots rang out. He took a few steps, then fell.

I moved to the front lines. The first thing I saw was a dog running toward us, with bullets kicking up the sand all about him. Some one caught him and sent him back to the beach. He was one of the few Jap "prisoners" we captured. The two-legged ones preferred death or suicide to surrender.

It was now late afternoon. We had begun a steady advance. The Japs were being pushed back, but were fighting for every inch of sand.

THAT night was like a holiday in hell. Tracers bounced like fiery rain all over the island. Machine guns never stopped chattering. Clouds of smoke hung over us and fires from burning Jap installations roared fiercely. The few moments of silence were broken by Japs who screamed like animals in pain. But that was an old trick. Some of the veterans just grinned.

One-man suicide details infiltrated through our lines and tried to sneak up on us in our foxholes. One Jap scream was followed by a burst of gunfire. Then Major Crowe's voice roared out:

"Damn it, don't shoot them—use your knife!"

Just after dark I dug a foxhole with my helmet. I dozed off for a few minutes, and then some one jumped in. Half asleep, I lunged. There was a quick whisper: "It's Chaplain Vernon. I can't say a service for those men out there now. Would you mind if I said it here?" I was more than happy to let

(*Continued on page 50*)

SMILE ON A ROSEBUSH

Saboteurs can turn even romance to their base ends. Patsy's almost blew up in her face, but the explosion came in the right place after all

Liberty's SHORT SHORT STORY

BY HORATIO WINSLOW

ILLUSTRATED BY CARL BOBERTS

THIS is the first time all the pieces have been put together. What happened before midnight the F. B. I. doesn't know yet—at least, not officially. What happened after midnight Patsy's never found out. On leaving California she felt so humiliated she never forwarded her Chicago address, so she didn't get letters or newspaper clippings.

Some of the details are past checking. No steno, for instance, took down the conversation between Mac and Johnny Bird, but it must have gone pretty much on this order:

"So you talked to that Patsy girl after you'd been drinking?"

"I'd only had two or three, Mac."

"Yeah?" All the time Mac must have been smiling his cast-iron white-enameled smile that ran below a mean Roman nose and two eyes as warm and friendly as a cobra's. "The old Mackenzie smile," Mac was in the habit of saying. "When I was a lad in Scotland we were taught to be cheerful and smile." Short and dark and close to middle age, Mac was very different from Johnny Bird, who was young and blondish and skinny and long like a string bean. "Well, how much did you tell her, Johnny?"

"Nothing. I'm pretty sure I told her nothing."

"You mean you were so drunk you don't remember what you said. Johnny, we take no more chances. You can tell her now that you're being transferred to Chicago. She's to take the train east Tuesday night; you'll follow in two weeks and marry her there."

"Me? Marry Patsy? You're crazy, Mac. She's cuckoo about kids. She even wants twins!"

"That's one thing you don't have to worry about. Fix her up a suitcase. Get the idea? A nice big suitcase. She'll take it with her Tuesday night on the ten-fifteen. I've checked and I know who's going on that train. She'll have good company—two major generals, a commission of big bugs from Australia, a San Francisco chemist called to Washington, and lots of military and naval small fry. Get busy, Johnny."

The talk must have gone something like that.

On Tuesday night, when Johnny Bird put Patsy aboard the ten-fifteen, Mac was on the station platform smiling as usual.

That smile always sent cold shivers down Patsy's back—too many teeth in it and not enough gaiety. Sometimes Patsy felt she never again wanted to know anybody with the smiling habit.

"This is California's loss," Mac said to her. "But it's Chicago's gain. Pretty soon Johnny'll be with you and you'll be raising a Chicago family. Good luck and take care of yourself."

"Thank you, Mr. Mackenzie," Patsy said. She had a little dumpling face that was kind and honest and her eyes were the big dark sort. She was always in earnest and she took things seriously.

Johnny shouldered his way into the car with her, carrying her two bags and the big suitcase.

"Johnny," she said, "you shouldn't have given me such a lovely present." She listened. "Why, there's a clock inside!"

"A little gold-plated number for your bureau. And a lot of other stuff. But don't try to open it till you get to Chicago. It's a surprise."

"It's a darling suitcase." Her eyes began to fill up. "But, Johnny, why can't I stay with you these last two weeks? Then we could go to Chicago together."

Johnny shook his head. "I've told you it isn't safe here. A Jap raid may come any time. Besides, you've got relatives in Chicago."

"Johnny."

"Yes?"

"You won't get mad if I ask you a favor?"

"Why should I?"

"The other night, Johnny, you—well, you drank too much. And you're too smart to do anything like that, Johnny. Why, you're so clever—you can build anything; you fix anything. You've got a wonderful brain. And now that we're going to marry and have a family, won't you cut out drinking?"

"I've quit already," Johnny said, "and for good."

She felt like jumping into the air and clapping her hands. "Johnny, I'm so glad! With you working in a defense plant, suppose you took a drop too much and began telling what you shouldn't tell. I'm so glad, Johnny."

"I'm through with drink," said Johnny. "And remember, you'll get the key to the suitcase by air mail just as soon as you send me your Chicago address."

The train pulled out. She waved from the window to Johnny and to Mac, who stood beside him smiling the old cast-iron smile.

She meant to stick it out and go all the way to Chicago, but before the train reached Grand Junction, just outside the city limits, she knew she couldn't leave Johnny. As the train came to a stop she charged her ticket up to profit and loss and, grabbing her two bags and the gorgeous suitcase, left the train.

She'd taken the big step. After waiting a bit she caught a bus into town and then traveled by taxi toward the little bungalow where Johnny and Mac lived, bachelor style.

By this time it was well after eleven; and, since Johnny and Mac both worked on day shifts and got up early, it occurred to her that if no lights were showing she'd better wait eighteen hours before breaking the news to Johnny. She left the taxi around the corner, a half block from the bungalow and, carrying the baggage, made the rest of the way on foot.

Her heart went *boomty-boom* when she spotted cigarette tips shining from the porch of the bungalow and heard Johnny's voice. She cut through a vacant lot. She wasn't trying to eavesdrop, but she wanted to know Johnny's mood before she sprung her surprise. But it was Johnny who surprised her. He was talking about a girl and the girl wasn't Patsy.

"This babe's a wonder, Mac. She's got everything except the idea that she's going to marry me. I don't have to kid her like I did Patsy."

Mac chuckled. "Patsy right now is the original Patsy."

"I'll say," Johnny cracked. "You know she paid for that ticket to Chicago with her own money. And what a nice buggy ride that's going to be!" He laughed again.

PATSY stood there trembling. At last she'd got the idea. Johnny'd had enough of her. He didn't like the idea of marriage and children, and maybe twins. So he'd packed a suitcase full of presents and sent her on her way. Just like that.

For a minute she didn't know whether she'd be able to control herself or not. She stood by the bungalow breathing hard and wondering whether she'd better pitch the suitcase up on the porch or throw it through the window. In the end she mastered her nerves. She laid it beside the wall of the house and crossed to the side street.

"It was your doing, Mac," she said to herself bitterly, while the tears streaked down her cheeks. "I know it was you who got Johnny to break with me. It was you who told him he could pay me off with what's in that suitcase. You and your damned smile full of teeth—as long as I live I never want to see a smile again."

She didn't have enough money to buy another ticket to Chicago, so she went to the bus depot, and a half hour later was rolling east as far as fifteen dollars would take her.

But, speaking of Mac's smile—the next morning it was found halfway down the block, hanging on a rosebush. A local dentist recognized it as having belonged to Mac, and F. B. I. experts

Mac was on the station platform smiling as usual. That smile always sent cold shivers down Patsy's back.

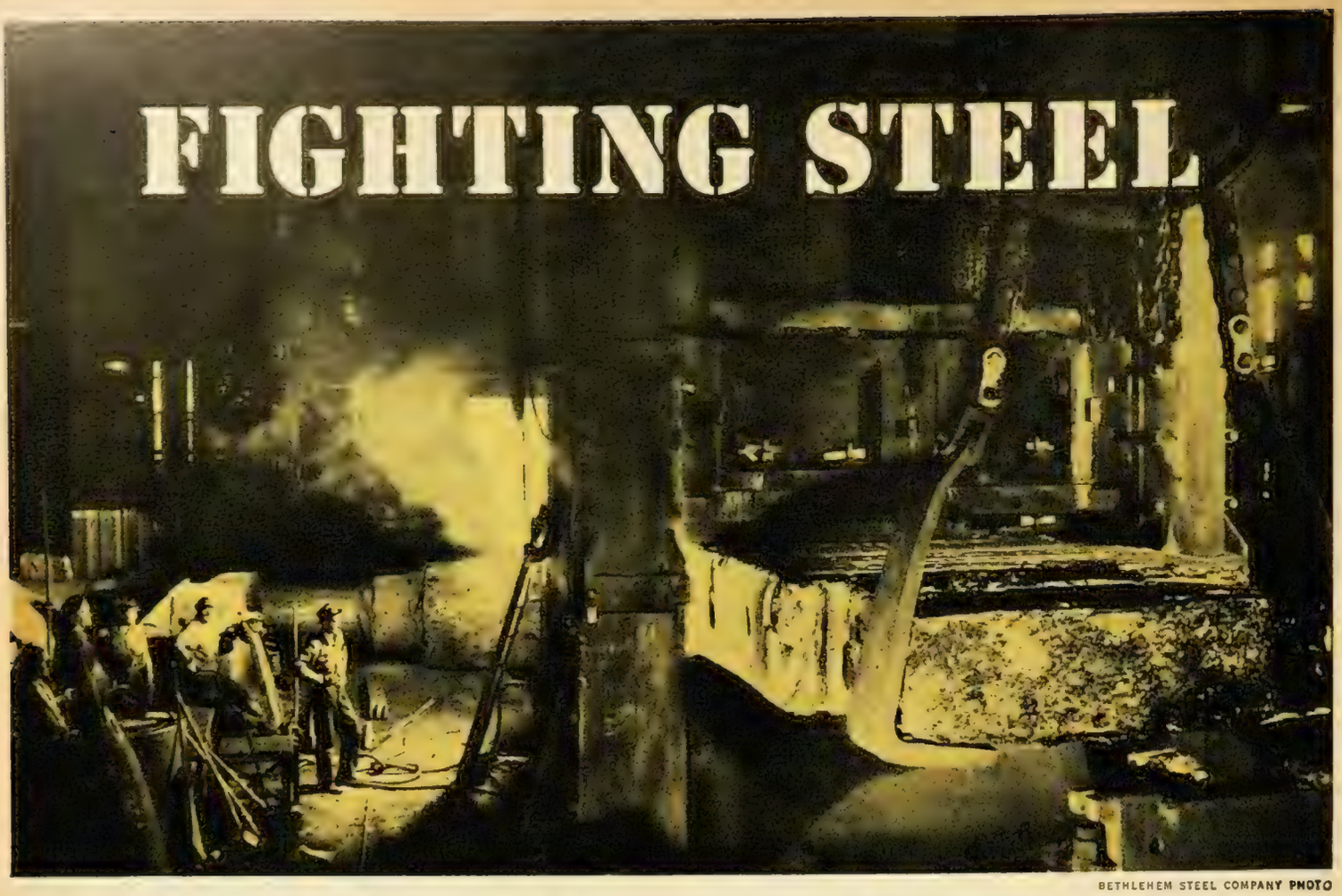
determined that the plates, upper and lower, had been made in Germany. Then it developed that the name wasn't Mackenzie but Mackensen, and that Johnny Bird had been born Johann Vogel, and that the two of them functioned in a Nazi sabotage group that extended from San Diego to Seattle.

Here's what had happened: The clockwork, arranged to detonate the charge in the suitcase and send Patsy and a lot of her fellow passengers to glory, seems to have been set to do its stuff at 1.45 A. M. Anyhow, that's when the explosion came. But instead of wrecking the train in the desert, it only blasted one bungalow and two saboteurs.

A messy job. . . . Still, even if Patsy finds out about this, she won't have time to grieve too extensively. In Chicago she met a fellow she'd known in high school, and now for more than a year and a half they've been Mr. and Mrs. And the twins, three months old, keep Patsy busy. She not only loves the twins but she's crazy about their smiles. Very sincere smiles they are; placed end to end, there wouldn't be a tooth in a mile of 'em.

THE END

FIGHTING STEEL



BETHLEHEM STEEL COMPANY PHOTO

Steel is our shield in war. A giant press forges a heavy slab of battleship armor.

Our mighty steel industry answers war's demands by producing beyond "capacity." It also comes up with strange new mixtures

BY MORRIS MARKEY

ONE day in 1942 the United States Navy sent an urgent message to all America's steel industry. An already serious shortage of a highly critical alloy was rapidly becoming more acute. The Navy was seriously worried. A special steel made with that metal was required for a ticklish job —the building of outer skins for submarines. This steel must be fairly thin and yet have great strength to resist tremendous underwater pressures. It must have a certain flexibility, so that it could ease its way through the changing stresses caused by crash dives and descents to great depths. It must be unaffected by the violent changes in temperature between the surface and 500 feet down.

Would the steel industry get to work at once and try to devise an alloy steel made with some metal more readily available than the critical one, yet having all the properties necessary for the job?

The research men in three of the big steel plants pooled their facilities and their brains and began to mix up batches of metal. On their seventh try the composition they had cooked in full-size lots met all the requirements. Even the six "failures" were good enough to roll out into plates for nonmilitary uses.

Now they had to work out mass-production methods. The speed of the rolls as they squeezed out the plates and the temperature of the metal as it was worked had to be determined with the utmost precision. Within exactly two months, well ahead of the Navy's schedule, the three companies were delivering new submarine skin plates to the Navy, and had even provided three other big companies with complete formulas and manufacturing instructions. There was never an interruption in the launching of submarines.

That story is only one casual item in the catalogue of the American steel industry's accomplishments since the demands of war made steel the most essential, the most critical of all fighting materials.

When Hitler moved into Poland in 1939 we had in this country a maximum steel production capacity of about 82 million tons a year. Britain could produce about 15 million tons. But in 1943, less than four years later, American mills rolled out 90 million tons of the gray metal and were completing enough new capacity to make 96 million tons in a year. We had built and put into operation, within that time, a new steel industry nearly as large as all of Britain's.

Today we are making more steel than all the rest of the world put together, including our enemies. And that means steel in almost endless varieties, including a list of alloy steels having almost countless different characteristics. Even more absorbing than the sheer weight of our steel production is the brilliant accomplishment of our metallurgists in devising these alloys.

As war increased the demand for special types of steel it took away from us much of the material for making many of those steels. The chief alloying metals were chromium and manganese, nickel and tungsten and vanadium. Certain seasonings of these metals stirred into a batch of simple carbon steel made all the difference in the world. But the onward rush of the Germans and the Japanese had closed off to us many of the most important sources of the seasonings.

So a whole new family of alloys had to be built up. This is the family now known as "National Emergency," or NE, steels. Had these alloys not been perfected, our Army, immense as it is, would lose half of its punch, and our seven-ocean Navy would be a flat impossibility.

The metallurgists gained their own particular victory by doing two things. Instead of adding full quantities of any one alloying metal to a particular sort of steel, they added small quantities of several. And they made superb use of the one domestic alloying metal which we have in quantity —molybdenum.

For example, nickel is used to toughen steel. It was discovered that steel just as tough could be made by adding far less nickel and carefully measured amounts of chromium and molybdenum. Thus between 1940 and 1943 the use of scarce nickel was cut materially, despite enormously increased deliveries of tough steel. Reduced by a somewhat similar process was the use of tungsten, employed to make the hard steels that cut and shape other metals.

Some of these NE alloys were developed under dramatic circumstances. Not long ago the War Production Board in Washington put through a call to the American Iron and Steel Institute, an association of steel companies:

"The situation in some of the critical imported alloying metals is getting worse. We've got to change the formulas we specified for the track sprockets of the new tanks. But the quality has got to be exactly the same. We're holding a meeting of the alloy steel section of WPB in Washington a week from next Saturday. You fellows get us a workable substitute formula by that time. See?"

So, from the Institute went out a long-distance call to John Mitchell, alloy metallurgist of one of the leading steel companies and chairman of the Institute's Alloy Steel Committee. Then in quick succession calls were made to metallurgists in four other big plants at Pittsburgh and Canton and Chicago and Cleveland. Each man was given certain technical information that the WPB had furnished. Then the research was parceled out so that there would be no overlapping of work. Each plant was assigned a different aspect of the problem.

During the days and nights of hard work that followed, whenever anybody thought he had something, he would telephone the others. When one man found he was off on the wrong foot, he too telephoned, to prevent the whole enterprise from being lost in a blind alley.

Ten days later, on the Saturday of the WPB meeting, the five metallurgists met at 7.30 A. M., in the Union Station at Washington—their first meeting since the problem had been laid in their laps. Each had a briefcase full of his findings. Within two hours, over the breakfast table, the report was consolidated. Before noon WPB officials had approved the brand-new alloy steels. Within a few weeks they were in production. Today those steels are keeping the tanks rolling from the Solomons to the road to Rome.

For shipbuilding the problem was different in kind but not in degree. Alloys were not the puzzle here. It was the enormously stepped-up production. Bluntly, we could not possibly have built the thousands of cargo and fighting ships that came off the ways last year unless the steel industry had turned out, for two years in succession, twice as many ship plates as it had visible capacity to turn out!

ORDINARILY the heavy-plate mills of the industry can turn out about 6,000,000 tons a year for ships and railway cars, heavy machinery, and other structural uses. At the beginning of 1941 the steel men were told that 12,000,000 tons would be needed.

It would require several years to build new rolling mills. That was out of the question. They cast their eyes about and centered upon the twenty-five great continuous sheet mills scattered through the industry. These have often been called the biggest machines in the world. Some of them are a quarter of a mile long. They had been designed for the production of thin steel sheets, the sort from which automobile bodies and refrigerators are made. And they had cost about $25,000,000 each.

You might think the only thing needed to convert these thin-sheet mills to ship-plate mills would be to widen the space between the rolls. Not so. When thin sheets are rolled, they can be coiled up in 1,000-foot lengths on huge spools at the end of the machine. But you can't coil a ship plate on a spool.

So they knocked out the ends of the long buildings and constructed great beds so that the plates could roll out in their natural flat state and cool off. Today shipbuilding is the largest single outlet for American steel, consuming about one fifth of all we produce. Indeed, two of the biggest steel companies. U. S. Steel and Bethlehem, have themselves been shipbuilders for many years, and they are producing in quantity now.

Then steel had to take on entirely new burdens. There was, for example, a dangerous scarcity of copper. Copper is an essential element in brass, and shell cases for artillery have always been made of brass. Guns of all calibers were designed to handle shell cases with the peculiar expansion characteristics of brass under the sudden intense heat of explosion. Those designs could not be changed to accommodate shell cases with different expansions. It took the steel men six months to work out the problem—a shell case of steel which would behave just like a brass one. This single achievement released nearly 700,000,000 pounds of copper for other uses.

Then bullet jackets for pistols, rifles, and machine guns were changed from copper to copper-clad steel. Altogether, this change-over has made about one quarter of our total annual copper production available in places where it is more urgently needed.

The same goes for aluminum. We needed nearly all of our aluminum for aircraft construction—and still there was not enough. Steels were developed which were so strong that thinner, smaller sections could be used and so reduce weight. The modern heavy bomber has about three tons of steel in its frame. And (*Continued on page 69*)

As a knife through cheese or butter, this giant rotary saw performs a trimming operation on rough-edged armor plate.

Lack of the metals used in alloy steels caused search for new ones. Here a technician tests samples for hardness.

NINE SECONDS FOR LOVE

They were dancers, Ilsa had said, not lovers; but Ted seized his chance and taught her a new routine. An onstage romance with an offstage finale

BY MURIEL BRUCE

ILLUSTRATED BY PAT HOLBROOKE

THE staff car pulled up with a jerk beside the Dover Airfield theater, and the sergeant at the wheel mopped his face. "We made it, sir. I sure hope I can get in to see the show!"

Second Lieutenant Young of Intelligence—Special Service had only discovered last week that he was Ted Young of Broadway and Hollywood—got out of the car and stood staring at the barnlike structure as if he had never seen it before. Everything was exactly as it had been night after night for three months, except that the men were massed solidly all the way down the road to the chapel, waiting for the theater doors to open.

She was here, then; Ilsa had come.

In just a moment he would see her, touch her, hear her voice. It was still incredible. Even this morning, with bulletins plastered all over the field and the loud-speakers blaring, he hadn't been able to believe what they said: Ilsa Brent, Star of the Broadway Hit DAKOTA, Will Dance the Famous Mayan Ballet Tonight at the Field Theater, in Person, with Her Original Partner, Dover's Own Ted Young.

And even if she came, he kept telling himself, it would mean nothing more than line of duty. This was the War of the Stage Door Canteen. You did your stuff, when and where you were asked. Ilsa's detour to Dover, on her way east from Hollywood, to put on this dance with him wouldn't mean that anything had changed. Ilsa would never change, especially now that she was known from coast to coast as the darling of American ballet. Love would mean less to her than it had before, which wasn't saying much for love.

But as Ted stood there hesitating, while the sun went down at the end of the line, and the big bombers roared up one after another, flying the training pattern, hope rose in his heart with a sudden surge. Out here in the wilderness, two hundred miles from anywhere, he had observed that love was direct and primitive: either you had your own woman or you had none. No dallying. Love was demon-driven by the knowledge that there was so little time. Ilsa wouldn't know about that, but actually it was beating in the very air.

So little time, and Ilsa here at Dover. Ted started into the theater just as Special Service, an excitable lieutenant from Savannah, erupted from the stage door red-faced and wild-eyed

"Where in hell have you been? What happened? Didn't you get your orders to meet the plane with me and rehearse at five? It's ten minutes of eight! She's all made up and ready to go on!"

[illegible] *and ready to go on.* At the [illegible] eight months and three thousand miles and a war fell away to nothing. Ted Young was back in show business, where he belonged. And the lurking hope in his heart went up another notch or two, tightening his throat. He grabbed Special Service by the arm, shoving him toward the door.

"Don't worry. We'll make it," he said. "What happened was that the major sent me out on a spy hunt at noon, and we had a couple of flats on the way back. Where's Ilsa?"

"On the stage, waiting for you. I didn't know what to do!"

Ted laughed. "You can always leave it to Ilsa. Let's go."

When he saw her, his breath stopped. She was sitting on a bench below the crudely painted backdrop of a moonlit pyramid in her fantastic make-up as a Mayan mummy, swathed in the rainbow wrappings that would become the strip tease of their dance. Beside her lay the hunter's bow and arrow, and in her hands she held the leopard-skin shorts that were the hunter's costume. Ted took an eager step.

"Ilsa!" he said.

But her green eyes, meeting his, were cold and brilliant; her smile was only the curving of her wide mouth against the dead white make-up. She tossed him the leopard skin.

"There's your G string," she said. "You almost didn't make it. Out winning the war, or something?"

Ted caught the bit of fur and his breath. Hope died and was buried; a hard lump slid down into his stomach. All right, if she still wanted it that way.

"Sorry," he said. "A slight case of sabotage and a couple of blowouts. Be right with you—"

And that, he told himself bitterly, was that. Fool, to dream even for a moment that life, which was taking everything away from everybody, would give him now the thing he had failed to achieve while he had the chance!

In the one cramped dressing room Ilsa's things were all around, and her perfume troubled his nostrils. *Don't stop to think, get on with it.* Quickly he shed his uniform, and the leopard skin was soft against his thighs after the starched khaki. Ted needed no make-up; the New Mexico sun had burned him brown as any Indian hunter. Racing back to the stage, he found Ilsa efficiently checking cues with the worried bandmaster and a still jittery Special Service.

"All the cues are so obvious," she was saying. "You can't miss. Who's doing the lights?"

"I'll handle those myself," said Special Service tensely. "My Lord, I wish we could have had at least one full rehearsal! But I suppose you two can dance this thing in your sleep. O. K., Miss Brent. Just signal for the curtain when you're ready."

The stage cleared; the sounds of the men pouring in to the theater beat against the lowered curtain like a threatening storm. Ilsa took her pose, lying flat on her makeshift bier at the base of the painted pyramid, hands crossed on her breast, feet close together. She eyed Ted critically from his crisp sun-bleached hair to his bare brown feet.

"You haven't put on weight," she remarked. "You're as beautiful as ever. But I suppose you'll be as rusty as an old tin can after all this time. Think you can remember the routine?"

He looked down at her as she lay there, her slight sturdy body perfectly relaxed but under control. The strong planes of her face—the high cheekbones, the quaintly arched nose—stood out in sharp relief between the silver bands that hid her head and throat like a nun's coif.

"I'll remember it all right," he said. "And if I creak at every hinge, so what? Those boys out there aren't yelling for me; it's you they want. Hear them?"

"I hear them," Ilsa said. "Wolves howling. It's a familiar sound these days. Well, no matter how bad you are, try not to drop me in the lift-ups, won't you?"

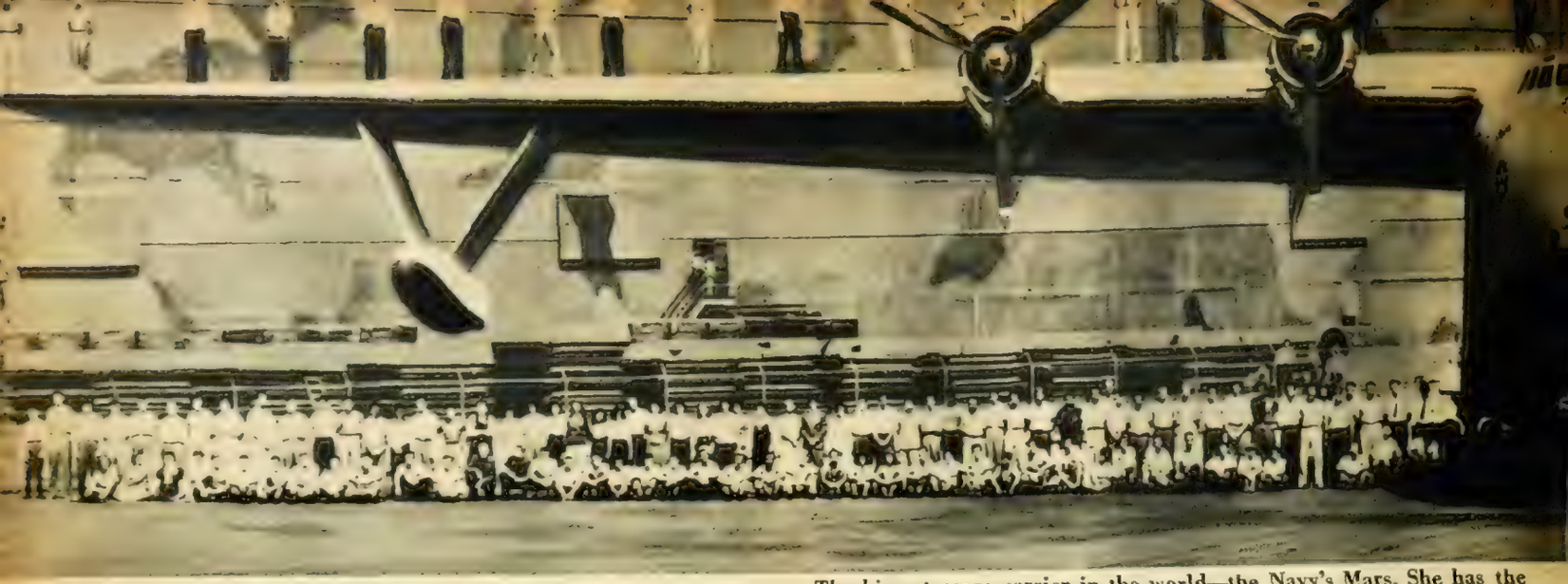
Drop her—almighty heaven! That was the supreme insult from one dancer to another. No, she hadn't changed. Cold as a glacier, and as hard; that was Ilsa. The dance came first, and to hell with personal feelings or desires. Ted snatched up his bow and arrow, strode out into the wings, and said harshly, "Curtain!"

THE theater darkened, and the orchestra—the swing section of the post band—struck up the insidious thrumming that was the theme song of Dakota. The steady roar from the audience went up a tone or two—they'd have the roof off before the night was over. The curtain went up slowly. Special Service was doing a job with the lights; the pyramid, pale sand color, stood out in sharp perspective against a background of purple hills, a star-spattered sky, and a huge pale moon on the left. The base of the pyramid, where Ilsa lay, was hidden in shadow. . . .

As Ted stood there, waiting for his cue, nostalgia gripped him. This wasn't an Army airfield in New Mexico. They were back in New York, on the first

(*Continued on page 48*)

The hunter raised the princess above his head, holding her there, poised.



The biggest cargo carrier in the world—the Navy's Mars. She has the

The Navy gave the world's biggest airplane a chance to do her stuff. An officer aboard gives us the exclusive log of the record-smashing flight

SECRET MISSION

CHIEF BILL PERRY was bent over, peering out of the port hatch of the world's biggest operating airplane. Below him, mile after mile of surging Atlantic was receding northward. He watched it, and there were few happier men in the world at that moment. The "Old Lady" was proving herself.

The Old Lady was the Mars, the Navy's huge flying boat. Suddenly her skipper, Lieutenant Commander Bill Coney, remembered something. The Mars was passing over the equator, and there was one man aboard who had never "crossed the line."

He ran down to the galley and a moment later appeared with a cup of hot water. Sneaking up behind the unsuspecting Perry, he poured it into the chief's pants pocket. Perry jumped a foot and would have dived out of the hatch, except that he could never squeeze his bulk through it. The skipper howled.

Now Chief Perry was deliriously happy. He had been initiated into the Pollywogs by the skipper of the Mars himself!

What kind of shenanigans were these, anyway? True, the Mars was performing her first mission for the Navy, and doing it slickly. But Chief Perry is no callow kid. He is forty-eight years old, by far the oldest man aboard. He is a veteran of World War I and wears the Victory, French Legion of Honor, Verdun, and Mexican service medals. He was a mechanic on another famous Navy flying boat, the NC-4, which made the first Atlantic crossing in 1919. Furthermore, he was married last April and is still looking for a honeymoon.

So why should he be acting up like a schoolgirl over her first date?

Just for this reason. Roly-poly Bill Perry had been there when they'd punched the first rivet for the Mars. He had inspected every rivet punched thereafter, and every lick of work done on her, over and over again. He had heard the skeptics say she was overbulky and wouldn't fly. He had heard them say this and he had heard them say that. And he had kept his chin stuck out.

Now the Old Lady herself was delivering her majestic answer. This was her maiden war flight, a secret mission from Patuxent River, Maryland, to Natal, Brazil, and back. She was gone eight days, and when once again she slid through the Patuxent's spray she had shattered all existing records for cargo transportation and overwater flight.

This is her log, and it really goes back to November 8, 1941, when the Mars, built by the Glenn L. Martin Company at Baltimore, was launched on the Middle River as a Navy patrol bomber. The plane was to give Martin plenty of headaches, but he never for a moment lost faith in her design. In July, 1942, the gigantic bomber was officially tested over Chesapeake Bay.

But she was destined not to bomb. Large cargo-carrying planes were needed, and the Navy saw in the Mars great potentialities as a super freight car of the air. With her 117-foot, two-deck hull, the Mars had the capacity of a fifteen-room house. The Navy ordered her converted, and the Martin Company set about to do a rush job. When it got through, it had a plane that could carry as much in one trip as seven standard cargo planes.

Then, suddenly, shortly after her acceptance by the Navy, Vice-Admiral John S. McCain, U. S. N., Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Air), directed Captain Don Smith, head of the Naval Air Transport Service, to put the Mars into immediate service "to prove whether the type can really haul material to and from the war fronts in quantity." The Mars was still being tested, but Captain Smith decided to give her her big trial without further ado.

His orders to Skipper Bill Coney were brief, and said in effect, "Take the Mars nonstop to Natal, Brazil (if you can), with thirteen tons of cargo. Come back through the Caribbean. Bring back every ounce of war material you can find."

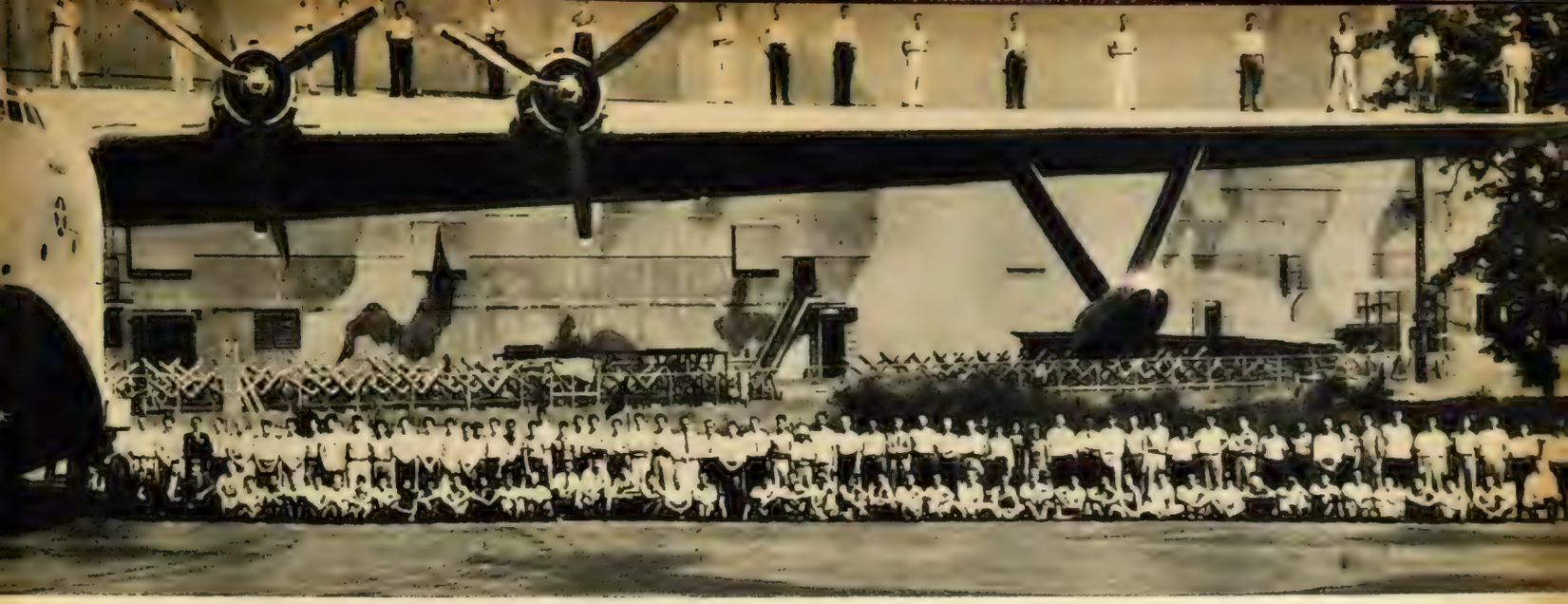
That was November 26, 1943. The flight was to start November 30. That meant the men of the Mars had three days to get ready. When the order reached Naval Air Transport Squadron Eight at Patuxent River, it caused some consternation.

Not that they lacked faith in the Old Lady. Eleven of the crew of fifteen had been assigned to the Mars for a year and a half. They had lived with her, worked on her, and flown her so often that it was inevitable that they should come either to love her or hate her. With them it was love. And, like Chief Bill Perry, all of them had their chins stuck out for her.

Furthermore, they knew she could take it. On October 5, 1943, Skipper Coney had taken her up on an endurance test. And the skipper, thirty-seven-year-old veteran of Navy flying-boat operations and for years an Eastern Air Lines transport pilot, had kept the Old Lady's four 2,200-horsepower Wright Cyclone engines humming for thirty-two hours and seventeen minutes.

But this was different. This was the Old Lady's big chance. Up to now she had never been operated on or off any area outside of Chesapeake Bay. Nothing like this had ever been done before, and no matter how much you loved her, the Old Lady was new and relatively untested, as aircraft testing goes. Who wouldn't be as nervous as a witch? Furthermore, a lot had to be done.

For three days and three nights the



capacity of a fifteen-room house and can lift a load of seventy-four tons.

OF THE MARS

BY LIEUTENANT LEON W. SHLOSS, U.S.N.R.

crew labored. Thousands of pounds of test equipment had to be removed. Life rafts, life jackets, provisions, water, and countless other items had to be procured and loaded. Bunks and soundproofing had to be installed. Mechanics set about tearing down the engines for inspection. They went over every inch of the electrical system.

The crew did most of the job itself. Sure, additional manpower was available, ready and willing. But listen, mister, somebody might tighten a bolt too far, or not far enough. The Old Lady would feel better if the boys did it—and so would the boys. They were still working feverishly over the engines after midnight the morning of the take-off—feverishly, in bitter wind, below-freezing temperature, and falling snow.

Take-off time was still bleak and cold, but the sun was doing its best to gild the Old Lady's wings as she rode there at anchor. Those wings were something to contemplate. They span 200 feet, and Billy Perry can walk inside them, crouched over, to inspect the engines, as he did time and again during the flight.

They had to be big. The Mars, her men, her gas, and her cargo weighed 148,500 pounds that morning. That's seventy-four tons. No plane had ever lifted a load of that size. Thirteen tons of it was her cargo—Christmas mail for the boys fighting in the Mediterranean, more than half a million letters. And it wasn't just tossed aboard. Engineers had to supervise gas loading and compute weight throughout the boat to assure perfect balance for the take-off.

At last the moment arrived. Skipper Coney, with 10,000 flying hours behind him, settled himself in the pilot's seat. All hands were at their stations, and all suddenly appeared at ease. The tensest person aboard was the officer assigned to the flight by the Navy Department—the writer of this account of it; but Lieutenant Tex Witherspoon, the navigator, soon put him at ease, too. Tex was the first American to join the R. A. F., saw service with the R. C. A. F., and now had been around plenty for the Naval Air Transport Service—all in this war.

Said Tex: "Don't worry. Whatever it is, the Old Lady will do it."

SKIPPER CONEY throttled at full power, the four engines bellowed their might, and the Mars moved down the cold gray river faster and faster. For fifty-six seconds the huge boat thundered against the Patuxent, spray screaming from her quarters. Then up the step she went, and all seventy-four tons of us was climbing across Chesapeake Bay and winging straight for the Atlantic.

So much for that. Next stop—Natal, Brazil! That was 4,375 miles distant, over water all the way, much of it sub-infested. And we were going to try to do it all in one gulp. If we made it, it would be the longest nonstop cargo flight in history. Actually, we were some time under way before the skipper let the crew in on the destination. If we weren't to make it, we'd have to know by the time we reached Belem, Brazil, nearly 1,000 miles short of our goal. The alternative would be a landing in the ocean.

We couldn't climb very high because we were so heavily loaded, so we stayed at 1,000 feet until gas consumption lightened the load enough to let us reach an altitude where operation would be easier and more economical. Unfortunately, when we did climb we met bad weather and had to come back down. It consumed so much gas that we decided we'd have to remain at 1,000 feet all the way to Natal to make it.

But a strong tail wind helped nicely, and as we winged southward everything was made plane-shape and inspected all over again. Here's what you would have seen if you had been with us.

Both decks of the Mars extend the full length of the ship. The flight deck, thirty by twelve feet, is topside and forward. Aft of the flight deck come a machinery compartment; a fumeproof bunkroom with four bunks; crew's quarters with six bunks; and behind that a long narrowing tunnel up to the enormous tail assembly. A narrow catwalk leads into the plexi-glass rear blister. When I looked down from it, I could see flying fish skimming along in schools just atop the swells.

Below and aft is the waist compartment, filled with cargo and eight bunks. Next forward are the wardroom and the galley, across from each other. The wardroom is like a breakfast nook and seats six. The galley has electric burners, sink, large electric icebox, cupboards, plastic dishes, and two electric percolators. There is always plenty of coffee.

Going forward through the watertight hatches—there are seven watertight compartments on this lower deck—you come to a four-place bunkroom, the main cargo hold, two more bunk compartments, and two machinery compartments, the last in the very bow of the boat.

The flight was about four and a half hours old and we were 200 miles southwest of Bermuda when Chief Al Larkin, flight steward, served lunch: steak, canned pears, bread and butter, and coffee. The Mars was really humping along ahead of that tail wind, and when a rainbow materialized out of a shower we took it as a good omen.

(*Continued on page 52*)

The crew of the "Old Lady" have a deep love for her. She didn't let them down.

NO MONEY IN

WHAT HAS GONE BEFORE

PRIVATE JEFF CONLEY was returning home after eighteen months in the Southwest Pacific. Still weak from wounds gained while winning a D. S. M. and other medals, he was glad to reach Twin Buttes, Nevada, and eager to see his mother; even lazy old Uncle Hoke, who loved whisky. But more than any one, Jeff longed to see his sweetheart, Ellie Carmichael.

Walking along the road, he was offered a lift by two pretty girls, Peggy Allenwood and Lila Ducane, the latter the daughter of Will Ducane, wealthy copper man and owner of twenty thousand acres of land around Twin Buttes. Hero worship set in the moment the girls discovered Jeff's identity, his exploits having been well publicized by the local press.

Less than an hour after Jeff's arrival, Uncle Hoke told him Ellie was engaged to Tod Deever. Furious, Jeff, finding Tod at Ellie's house, tried to fight him, but collapsed from his war wounds.

Dan Carmichael drove Jeff home and told him how Ducane had tried to buy the Carmichael ranch and, when Dan refused to sell, had resorted to every sort of tactics to make him change his mind. What puzzled Dan was why Ducane should want his place, some of which was in badlands.

One evening, some neighbors, including the Carmichaels, were visiting Jeff, when one of them shouted, "Look, Dan!" And there, far up on its hill, they saw the Carmichael house ablaze.

PART THREE

THE Carmichael house was old and its wood was dry, and the flames rose higher and higher while we stared. Though it was three miles away, it made you hold your breath. It got you by the throat. It was like watching somebody drown too far from shore to be reached—seeing the fling of his arms and not being able to do anything about it. You were paralyzed.

I knew the way Dan Carmichael must feel, and his wife, too, and Ellie, wherever she was. Dan whispered a word that was hoarse. It was the only sound in the room.

When he turned, the crowd stampeded. They pushed out of the door behind him. They followed him down, pounding on the stairs, and outside there were yells. I watched car after car switch on its lights and speed off toward the Carmichael place, until a long line of headlights filled the road.

Afterwards I just sat there in my bed, staring through the window, not able to do a thing. It was like being a prisoner behind bars.

They would form bucket brigades from the Carmichael well, I guessed, if they could find enough buckets. They'd all work like fury, the women as well as the men. But the way those flames were leaping now, I knew there wasn't much any one could do to save the Carmichael place. In an hour or two it would be a heap of smoking embers, after three generations of standing on

Before I could move, Lila bent over and kissed me right on the lips.

MEDALS

BY OSCAR SCHISGALL

ILLUSTRATED BY SEYMOUR BALL

its hill; and folks would be asking how in thunder the fire had started, considering that the place had been empty at the time, with the Carmichaels at our house.

I wondered about that, too.

And I got to thinking about other things while I watched the fire grow and spread itself in the sky—how folks like Dan and us, if our houses burned down, were left with just about nothing. We weren't Ducanes, with a summer ranch here and a winter home there, and enough money so we wouldn't have to worry about the loss. A thing like this could break old Dan.

Only ma was with me now, standing at my window, and maybe she thought the way I did. Her eyes were wide with pain for the Carmichaels. Company coming all day had left her tuckered out, so that she didn't look right. The flesh of her face hung in tired sacks.

"It can't be what he said," she whispered. "It just *can't* be!"

That sounded queer. "What who said?" I asked.

"Dan Carmichael. I just won't believe it." She kept staring at the fire three miles away. I had to tell her I didn't know what she was talking about.

"About Ducane," she said. "About Ducane taking this way to drive him out of home and shelter—so he'd sell what was left and be glad to get the money."

"That's crazy!"

"Sure it is," she said. "I told Dan. He was too wild to listen."

"Ducane may not be our breed, but he's not the kind who'd burn down a man's home."

"I hope," ma said in a strained voice, "Dan don't take it into his head that his notion is right. I—I hate to think what he'd do. You can drive even a mild man like him just so far. My gosh, Jeff, look at that place burn!"

The flames were very high now. The sky over them was red, and you could see the red flicker even on the rocks far up in the badlands. The cars had reached the place. I saw the lights of other cars speeding across the valley from the Ducane ranch. That meant Ducane's men, too, were coming to help fight the fire.

"It's too late," ma whispered.

"It was too late when it started."

AFTER a silence, while we watched, ma said, "Madge Carmichael told me they didn't leave any kind of fire behind. She was sure of that. No fire in the kitchen stove or anywhere."

It was pretty clear what ma had in her mind. It would be in everybody's. Fires don't start by themselves. And yet I couldn't take Dan's idea that Will Ducane had anything to do with a thing like this. That was heaping *too* much against Ducane.

Ma talked in a low voice, half to herself, about the Carmichaels and how it was hard to realize they'd have no home, not even a place to sleep in tonight. That made her catch her breath.

"I—I'll ask 'em to stay here with us, Jeff," she said.

I sat up stiff. "Oh, no!"

"They got to stay *somewhere*."

"Not here—I don't want them here!"

"But, Jeff—Dan and Madge—why, they're like family—"

"I don't want Ellie living in this house!"

Couldn't ma understand how I felt about having Ellie around me all day, seeing her go off with Tod Deever, watching Tod bring her back? Just thinking about it made me sick.

Ma didn't argue. Not then. She waited more than two hours, till the fire was low on the hill, almost dead under skies that were dark again, and cars began to drive away from the ashes of the Carmichael place. Looking that way, realizing there was no longer a white house where it had always stood, gave you a lost and empty feeling.

With the Carmichael fire an unsolved mystery and Will Ducane still bidding for land, the gloom in the valley deepens and Jeff turns to Lila for consolation

Ma was all worn out when she turned to me. She said, "They'll want to be near their land while they build themselves another house, Jeff."

"They can live in Twin Buttes."

"I couldn't ever look into their faces again, Jeff, if I didn't offer them a home with us."

"It isn't Madge and Dan I mind," I said. "But Ellie—"

"You got no call to be afraid of Ellie."

"It's not that I'm afraid!" I said. "It's just—" But I couldn't put words to it, and after a while I shook my head and didn't try to say what I felt.

Ma said in a quiet way, "Let me handle this, Jeff. I think it'll do Ellie good to be near you. Maybe in the long run it'll do you good, too."

"If you figure you can throw Ellie and me together and make it stick, you're wasting time, ma. She's taken Tod Deever, and that's the end of it."

"Once it seemed like the end when she took *you*, Jeff."

"That was different. She didn't throw anybody over to come to me."

Ma said, still gentle, "I think I know Ellie Carmichael pretty well." She smiled. "I know her as long as her own mother does."

"If you're expecting me to court her all over again—"

"No," ma said. She kept looking at me as she went to the door. "I got a notion maybe Ellie will be courting *you*."

Then she went out. I lay back and groaned and quit arguing. Sometimes ma got queer ideas.

About eleven o'clock Uncle Hoke came back in the flivver. He'd been fighting the fire with others till he was fit to drop with tiredness. I saw him in the moonlight, getting out of the car and starting for the barn. His arms hung loose and his knees were bent. He'd put on his Sunday pants for the company we'd had, but he didn't look any better now than he did in his overalls. Tonight he *needed* his jug of whisky, I could see.

But ma called to him from the kitchen door. He stopped and scratched his head, with one eye still on the barn.

"You can get in there later," ma said. "I want you to go tell the Carmichaels I got beds ready for them."

"I already told 'em that," Uncle Hoke said. His voice sounded cracked and parched. "They'll be here by-an'-by."

"Then come in and tell me what happened."

"Aw, Amy—"

"I got coffee ready."

"Who in hell wants coffee?" Uncle Hoke asked. "I got to get me some sleep—"

"Hoke, you come right here!" Ma was sharp. She could always handle Uncle Hoke that way. "That whisky'll keep!"

So Uncle Hoke shuffled over from the barn, scratching the back of his head and cussing. I called to ma to bring him up to my room, so I could hear the story too; and pretty soon he sat on a chair, bleary-eyed, with his gray beard all tangled, while his hands rubbed over his knees.

He told us how they hadn't even tried to save the Carmichael house. They'd got there too late, and there wasn't any way of getting close to it, the flames were so wild and hot. Instead, they'd climbed ladders and kept the roof of the barn wet, so it couldn't catch the sparks flying all around.

"DID Dan say anything more about Ducane?" ma asked when he finished. You could see it worried her.

"No," Uncle Hoke said. "He was too danged busy to say anything at all. Besides, Ducane himself was right there with a lot of his boys. They helped fine." Uncle Hoke pulled a hand over his eyes. "Gosh, I'm tired."

Ma sighed. I wished she'd go to sleep, because the lines in her face were deeper now, and sadder. "It'll be awful for Dan and Madge," she said. "When you think of them having to build all over again—"

"They can't," Uncle Hoke said. "Dan's land-poor. No money to talk about—not enough to build a house, anyhow. And hardly any insurance, either."

Uncle Hoke got up, rubbing a hand over his mouth. He looked at me in a queer way, and his eyes were blearier than ever.

"There's some things in all this a young feller like you ought to think about, Jeff," he said. "Look at Dan. A lifetime on his land and not enough money to build him another house. And look at *you*. Three generations on *your* land, and not enough money to stop your girl from going to another feller. Something's wrong *somewhere*, Jeff. Seems like this just can't be the right way to live. We—we don't ever get anywhere."

He walked out then, grumbling, and we knew he was heading for the barn. Ma didn't try to hold him back any more. All of a sudden she seemed very old, with her shoulders heavy and drooping, and pain in her eyes. I had a notion her lips were trembling, too.

"Don't listen to the old fool, Jeff," she whispered.

But it wasn't as if she meant it. I was thinking how ma had given her whole life to our little spread of land, and what did she have to show for it? A

(*Continued on page 53*)

The FELLOWS in the FOXHOLES

BY GARY COOPER

Gary's been there. He's seen them. He knows what they're thinking and what they want most. Let him tell *you*

Gary Cooper in the title role of The Story of Dr. Wassell.

HE was hardly more than a kid, but already an old campaigner, a veteran of two years' fighting against the Japs. Now he was reporting back to his outfit on New Guinea after a ten-day leave, and he was three days late. He told the C. O. earnestly that he'd aimed to get back on time but just hadn't been able to make it.

No, he hadn't been to Australia or New Zealand, where most of our boys go when they get ten days' leave on New Guinea.

This boy had been clear to Ohio, U. S. A., strictly by power of thumb.

He'd thumbed a ride across the Pacific on a bomber, then by highway back to a little old house in an Ohio town—just to spend one day with his family.

Not much of a visit for so long and hard a trip. But it was enough to assure him that every one at home was "all right." That was the important thing. It had given him the chance to sit once more in front of the fire, with his arm around his mother; to have a long, long talk with his dad; to eat hot corn bread; to sleep again in his own bed; and probably to pat the head of the dog he used to hunt with when Japs were not the game. Then he'd hitchhiked all the way back again—back to a foxhole on New Guinea.

And he'd done it in just thirteen days.

"Coop" talks with an officer at one of the South Pacific outposts he visited.

Una Merkel, Phyllis Brooks, Andy Arcari, and I heard about that boy while we were out there in the Southwest Pacific on a tour arranged by the Hollywood Victory Committee and USO. I'm passing the story along to you because it's the strongest and straightest way I know of telling you just how homesick a boy can get when he's fighting a war in a jungle on the other side of the world.

And I'm passing it on because it has a moral for all of us at home: Write to the boys! Write longer and oftener. And remember: no bit of news is too trivial. They're hungry for it.

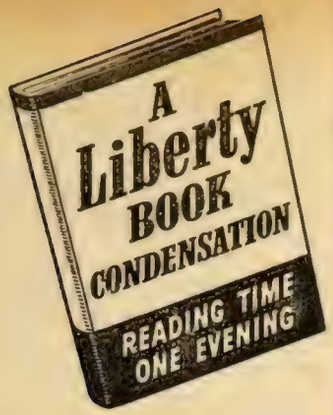
Some of those boys are wondering whether the folks at home know what they're doing out there, and why they're doing it. Some wonder whether they've been totally forgotten. *They* haven't forgotten. They're actually worrying about conditions at home, about the welfare of those they left behind. They read in old newspapers about rationing, and are concerned whether the home folks are getting enough to eat! They read about strikes, inflation, greedy manufacturers, black markets — and they're puzzled.

We found on our trip that we were important to them for one reason: we were a link with home. We could tell them how things were going back home, or they thought we could.

That trip was perhaps the greatest emotional experience of my life. The poignant things happened in ways I can't describe exactly. Perhaps it was in the way a boy looked when he said, "Thanks," or in the note of his voice when he asked, "How is the good old U. S. A.?" Maybe it was in the patience of two thousand of them sitting in the rain on a blasted hillside waiting for us to put on a show, or in the warmth and gratitude that sprang into a boy's eyes when he first saw Una and Phyllis, two American girls.

The act we put on for the troops certainly wasn't much, but Ziegfeld himself never staged a show before a more appreciative audience. The girls, of course, were the main attraction. Andy Arcari supplied the music, playing everything from classical to swing on his accordion. The boys were crazy about him. We'd put on a couple of little skits, and I'd bellow through Pistol Packin' Mama. But behind my back the girls were providing the real entertainment in a dance routine. Then Una and Phyllis would sing They're Either Too Young or Too Old. It was the hit number of the tour because it sounded so reassuring to the boys who'd left girls behind them.

(*Continued on page 65*)



THE OLD BATTLE-AX

ILLUSTRATED BY FREDERICK CHAPMAN

A Mystery Novel by

ELISABETH SANXAY HOLDING

Her life was prim and quiet—until her sister came back from fallen France and murder stalked her household.

MRS. HERRIOTT stood behind the barrier among a little crowd all watching the passengers coming down the gangway.

She had taken pains with her appearance today. A tall, slight woman of fifty, drooping forward a little from the waist, with fine gray eyes, dark-lashed, and abundant dark hair threaded with gray, there was an absent-minded jauntiness about her in her belted blue suit and her new three-cornered hat. I don't want Madge to be disappointed in me, she thought.

The last time she had seen her sister had been on another pier twenty-five years ago. Madge had been twenty-three then, sailing off to France, where her new husband had a very good position in the Paris branch of his uncle's business.

"Sharley?" said a voice.

Mrs. Herriott turned. "Madge—" she said. She threw her arms around her sister and was enveloped in a cloud of musky perfume.

A woman childishly thin and flat, in a scanty black suit, a little yellow hat, a glow of rouge on her hollow cheeks, long bright-gold hair almost to her shoulders, tired eyes beneath purple lids—that was Madge.

"I'll get Silas," Mrs. Herriott said in a moment, "and he'll look after your baggage."

"I have just these two bags. Who's Silas?"

"I've written you about him, Madge. You remember the Polks, in Carbury. Silas Polk drives my car for me. Let's go now, Madge. I'll carry both bags."

"I'll keep this one," Madge said quickly.

Out in the street, in the dusty spring sunshine, Silas got out of the car and came toward them, lean and haughty in his tan uniform, chin up, neck rigid.

"Madge," said Mrs. Herriott, "this is Silas Polk. Silas, here's Miss Madge—Mrs. de Belleforte now."

He touched his visored cap and said nothing. Madge looked at him and said nothing, either.

"Where are we going, Sharley?" she asked, when they were seated.

"Why, home, Madge. To Carbury."

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"Sharley! I want to stay in New York and look up Jeff Quillen and dozens and dozens of people. I want to go shopping. I want to go to a good hotel, Sharley, and I want to have a hell of a time."

Oh, not now, Madge, my poor Madge, thought Mrs. Herriott. Her sister's nails were rimmed with black, her neck was grimy, her shoes were broken. But that could have been overlooked in some one just arriving from the war zone. There was something rakish and tawdry about Madge, something almost incredible in a Pendleton. She mustn't burst upon people—like this, Mrs. Herriott thought. It would give them such a completely false impression.

"Of course you can come back to New York the moment you want," she said. "But I thought a good night's sleep in the country air—and my hairdresser could come in tomorrow morning—"

Madge shrugged her shoulders. "All right. But, for heaven's sake, let me get a drink." She called to Silas, "Stop at the first bar you see."

"How did you leave Pascal, Madge?" asked Mrs. Herriott.

Her sister glanced quickly at her. "Didn't you get my

letter? About Pascal? He got pneumonia and died, poor soul."

"But, Madge, how dreadful!" Mrs. Herriott had never seen even a snapshot of Pascal de Belleforte, the second husband, but Madge had written about him often and affectionately. She had mentioned him in her last letter, written not three months ago.

The car stopped and Silas slid back the glass. "This do?"

Mrs. Herriott looked out. "But it's just a saloon."

"This is good enough," said Madge. She led Mrs. Herriott through the swing door over to one of the little tables and ordered double Martinis.

"I don't really want a double, Madge. There's no use paying—"

"I'll pay for it," said Madge. "I'm not poor, Sharley. I won't be a burden on you."

"I never thought that," Mrs. Herriott said as evenly as she could. "I thought you'd come and stay with me and share what I had."

"Thanks," said Madge, and fell silent.

"Carla is looking forward so much to seeing you," said Mrs. Herriott.

"Carla?"

"You can't have forgotten your own brother's child."

"My dear Sharley, I never saw Ed's child." Madge shrugged.

She was silent a moment, studying her sister. Then she spoke suddenly. "I'm going to marry again, Sharley." She said it with defiance, but Mrs. Herriott refused to accept the challenge.

"I see," she murmured.

"I want to see Jeff Quillen as soon as I can. I made a will when I was in Lisbon—waiting, you know—and I sent it to him air mail. Pascal left me quite well off. Long before the war he started investing money over here, and now there's something like two hundred thousand dollars waiting for me. I'm leaving it all to Ramon." Madge looked challengingly at her sister. But Mrs. Herriott never turned a hair.

Impatiently Madge pushed back her chair and sat sideways, crossing her legs, that were thin as matchsticks in black stockings full of runs. "Another double Martini," she called to the waiter.

The juke box began a tune, loud and slow. "A tango," said Madge dreamily. "Ramon's the most divine dancer . . . he's so sweet to me . . ."

As soon as they got back into the car, she fell asleep. When they reached home, Silas had to carry her upstairs into the room that was ready for her, and he dropped her gently on the bed. She roused then and clasped his arm with both hands, looking up into his face and giggling. She said something to him in French that Mrs. Herriott did not understand, and Silas smiled. Mrs. Herriott took her sister's hands and loosed them.

"Close the door after you, please, Silas," she said; and was relieved when he obeyed.

Mrs. Herriott sat down on the bed and took off her sister's shoes, so shapeless, so worn. Think what Madge has been through, she said to herself. Who could blame her for being a little trying? She opened one of her sister's bags to look for a dressing gown. There was a black chiffon nightgown and a black chiffon negligee, very sheer, with a bow of magenta velvet hanging to the front by a thread—a crumpled and disreputable garment.

"I'll find you something more comfortable, Madge," she said, and went out, closing the door.

Josie, Silas' wife, was coming down the stairs—a pretty, rosy, dark-haired little thing in spectacles.

"Oh, is Mme. de Belleforte here, Mrs. Herriott?" she asked eagerly.

"Yes. But she's exhausted, Josie. She wants to rest."

JOSIE came from a small town in Rhode Island, from a family of French stock, thrifty and respectable people, but without her ambition. She had got a scholarship at Barnard and had worked in a bookshop. In her third year she had met Silas, and they had married after a very brief courtship. Silas had been a Junior at Columbia. Their families had disapproved of the marriage, but James, Mrs. Herriott's husband, had been alive then. He was willing to help them. James had believed in people marrying young.

Then, in their first summer, Silas had broken his neck, diving, and neither could finish college. They had come home to Carbury, and James had wanted to continue his help. They had come to work for the Herriotts then, and had stayed on after James died. Mrs. Herriott hadn't been able to pay them quite so much, but they had not minded that at all.

"I thought if I spoke a few words to her in French," Josie was saying, "it might make Mme. de Belleforte feel more at home."

"I'm sure it would, Josie," said Mrs. Herriott. "When she's a little bit rested."

She went into her own room and got a handsome gray crepe kimono—a present from James long ago. She took this in to her sister and helped her off with her clothes.

"Oh, let me alone!" cried Madge. "I want to go to sleep."

Mrs. Herriott went back to her room and shut the door wearily. Perhaps a bath would rest her. She had just changed her shoes for bedroom slippers when there was a knock at the door, sharp and startling. "Come in!" said Mrs. Herriott. It was Josie again.

"Oh, Mrs. Herriott! Ferdy's just come. I'd better send him away, hadn't I? I wouldn't want to think that Ferdy was a nuisance to any one, Mrs. Herriott."

"Oh, but he isn't, Josie!" said Mrs. Herriott. "Let him stay."

Ferdy, youngest of Josie's large family, had by his far from brilliant progress in school fallen far behind. As often as he was allowed he came to visit Josie, who coached him. He was a trial, but Josie seemed to have so much pleasure in his being there that Mrs. Herriott willingly submitted to his frequent visits.

Ferdy was sitting at the kitchen table eating when Mrs.

Herriott came down later. He pushed back his chair slowly and rose, a short and stocky boy in a white shirt strained too tight across his thick chest and baggy knickerbockers halfway down his stumpy legs. His black hair was too long and too oily-looking.

"How are you getting on in school, Ferdy?" asked Mrs. Herriott.

"Why, I'd have been all right, Mrs. Herriott, only the teachers don't mark the papers in a fair way. There's two teachers that have a down on me and—"

The doorbell rang and he stopped. Josie went out into the hall, and in a moment Carla came in.

"Aunt Sharley," she said, "I'm so excited about seeing Aunt Madge—"

Carla was pale as usual, blonde, delicate, aloof. Her arched brows gave her a faintly disdainful look. She was wearing a pale blue rayon suit, a little fancy, and a wide pale blue felt hat: cheap clothes, poor child.

"And here's Ferdy," said Mrs. Herriott.

"Oh, hello," said Carla without enthusiasm. "Can I run up and see Aunt Madge now, Aunt Sharley?"

"She's resting, Carla. She said she wanted to sleep."

IT was going to be very difficult to explain Madge's tiredness to Carla. Carla was twenty-three, an orphan now, with a small income which she occasionally added to by working as a secretary.

Mrs. Herriott sent her upstairs to unpack. When she followed her up a few minutes later, she stopped on the landing, surprised to hear Madge's voice.

"I don't know how I'm going to stand it! This hideous house—and a hideous way of living. I need something a little bit gay and civilized."

"I'm sure Aunt Sharley wants to do everything she can for you," said Carla's clear, even voice.

"I don't believe she cares about any one."

"Aunt Sharley's been very kind to me," replied Carla. "It's just that she's rather self-sufficing."

The door of Madge's room was open. There was no light in there; they were talking in the dark.

"She's so grim and disapproving," Madge went on. "She's a perfect old battle-ax."

Mrs. Herriott went past the dark room, noiseless in her felt slippers. She shut herself into her own room. Is that how I seem? she thought. Is that what I'm like?

Josie came along the hall in a little while, with her brisk loud tread, and knocked on the door to announce dinner. Mrs. Herriott came out at once. She went to knock on Madge's door. There was no answer for a moment; then the key turned in the lock and the door was opened by Silas.

"Mrs. de Belleforte wanted to give me some instructions," he said.

"I see," said Mrs. Herriott.

Madge was dressed and sitting in a chair, a sorry sight, with her bright yellow hair fluffed out and fresh rouge and lipstick lavishly applied.

"Would you rather have your dinner up here, Madge?"

"I don't want any dinner," said Madge. "Have you any barbital?" she asked.

"No, I haven't. But I think some food—"

"Sharley, for God's sake, let me alone!"

"Yes, of course," said Mrs. Herriott politely. "You want to rest. Naturally. Perhaps before you go to bed. If you want anything, Madge, just knock on the floor."

"I want to talk to Silas," said Madge.

"Later, if you don't mind, Madge. Just now—Silas?"

"No!" said Madge. "Now."

Silas looked squarely at Mrs. Herriott, and then he moved away from Madge.

Madge said something to him in French. He answered her in the same tongue, with a fluency that surprised Mrs. Herriott. Then he held the door open and followed Mrs. Herriott out.

Carla was waiting for her in the dining room. But dinner was strained. It was a great relief when Josie came in to say that Dr. Filson, Mrs. Herriott's clergyman, was in the hall. He had been passing by, and stopped to ask about Mrs. de Belleforte.

Mrs. Herriott persuaded him to take coffee with them. She liked Dr. Filson.

As she served her guest, Mrs. Herriott heard the stairs creak. Ferdy, she told herself. Going up to his room. Or coming down perhaps. Dr. Filson finished his coffee and rose.

"You'll let me know when it's convenient for me to pay my respects?"

"Oh, yes!" said Mrs. Herriott. "I'll go to the gate with you." They went along the path together.

"I'm very glad, Mrs. Herriott, that you're to have this companionship," he said. "I've thought more than once that you were somewhat lonely in Carbury."

"Of course, I was born and brought up in New York," she said, in her vague, polite way. "It's very different—"

He pushed open the gate, and stopped suddenly. He stepped back so quickly that he jostled her.

"Mrs. Herriott, don't come any farther. There's been—some sort of accident."

But she had seen Madge, lying sprawled on the pavement like a tawdry doll. The street light shone on her dry, bright gold hair. Her short, tight skirt was pulled above her knees, showing pink garters on her matchstick legs.

Dr. Filson closed the gate behind him and knelt down beside Madge, taking her wrist.

"Mrs. Herriott, I'm afraid the unfortunate woman is dead. If you'll call the police, I'll remain here."

"No! We can't leave her here—"

"I'll remain here, Mrs. Herriott, to see that she's not disturbed. But we must comply with the law."

He took off his neat dark jacket and laid it respectfully over Madge's face. Mrs. Herriott opened the gate and came out. She moved the coat to cover Madge's knees. She must get Madge into the house to protect her, to hide her from curious eyes. She went into the house. Josie was in the hall.

"There's been an accident," said Mrs. Herriott. "Please telephone for the police."

"What kind of accident, Aunt Sharley?" asked Carla from the doorway of the sitting room.

"Hush!" said Mrs. Herriott.

"Oh—I forgot that Aunt Madge was resting," said Carla.

Mrs. Herriott looked at her blankly. As she moved her head, she saw Ferdy peering through the half-open door to the pantry.

She hurried up the stairs. She had to get Madge's room ready for her. She locked herself in there, and turned on the light. Madge is dead, she said to herself. But no grief stirred in her; she felt nothing but that urgency to prepare for Madge. With an effort, she smoothed the rumpled bed, closed the suitcase. Then she remembered to pull down the shades. Now everything's ready for her, she thought. She stood waiting. Madge is dead, she thought. Madge had a heart attack. Like Aunt Anna. She went out into the street—to get fresh air. That's how people feel with a heart attack. My sister was exhausted—after the trip.

THERE was a very gentle knock at the door. She crossed the room and opened it to Dr. Filson.

"Will you come downstairs, Mrs. Herriott?" he asked in a whisper. "There's no need to disturb Mrs. de Belleforte. I'm very sorry that *you* have to be disturbed, but Sergeant Tucker says it's unavoidable."

Taking her arm, he started her toward the stairs. There was a man in a dark suit standing in the hall below, a stout young man with pale yellow hair in little curls all over his head and pale blue eyes, heavy-lidded.

"Mrs. Herriott, this is Sergeant Tucker of the Carbury detective force."

The sergeant questioned Mrs. Herriott briefly.

"Are you able to identify this woman?" he asked, finally.

"Why, no," said Mrs. Herriott. "No."

Nothing happened. She told that monstrous lie—and nothing happened. Once I've got Madge safely in her own room, they can know, she thought. But not now. They mustn't know that it was Madge—looking like that. Later, when I can get her in her own bed, in a nice clean gown—

"Now," said Sergeant Tucker, "I'd like to see Mrs. de

Belleforte for a moment. The body must be visible from the front windows upstairs, and she might have heard something, seen something."

"I'm sure she didn't. She was in bed and asleep. She's still asleep. I'm sorry."

"Don't you think that tomorrow morning would do, sergeant?" asked Dr. Filson.

"I'll ask Captain King," said Tucker. "But I'm naturally expected to get all the information I can, and without any delay, either. Now, I want to see Miss Pendleton. Will you wait in another room, please?"

All right, thought Mrs. Herriott. This is the end. Carla will tell them. I'll say that Madge was ill. Delirious.

Mrs. Herriott went along the hall to the kitchen. Silas sat at the table, in his shirt sleeves, reading a newspaper; Josie stood at the sink, her rosy face intent upon her work; Ferdy stood by her, drying a cup very slowly, in a sulky dream. Silas rose.

Josie, will you find Miss Carla, please? The policeman wants her to—look at the person—outside," Mrs. Herriott said.

Josie's eyes widened behind her spectacles.

"They'll ask us if we can identify her," said Silas.

It will be all over in a moment now, thought Mrs. Herriott. The dining room was dark, and she went in there and stood by the window. Carla will scream, she thought, and she waited for that. She heard footsteps on the gravel path. The front door opened. She went into the hall, and saw Dr. Filson leading Carla by the arm.

"An appalling sight!" Carla said in her clear, even voice. "A human wreck. So tawdry—"

"Carla!"

"I'm sorry," said Carla, "but I can't be sentimental about some stranger—"

Mrs. Herriott sat down in the nearest chair. Carla *doesn't know,* she thought. She never saw Madge, only talked to her in the dark.

Josie and Silas went out with the sergeant, and came back in a few minutes with Dr. Filson.

"The sergeant says he won't need to trouble you again tonight, Mrs. Herriott," Dr. Filson said.

"Then will they bring her in, please?"

"That's a very kindly thought, Mrs. Herriott, but there's a regular procedure that has to be followed. The police want to do everything possible to have the poor woman identified. Nobody in this house or in the house next door has been able to. There's nothing you can do for the poor woman."

"Aunt Sharley," said Carla, when he had gone, "Aunt Madge hasn't had any dinner!"

"She needs rest and quiet more than anything," Mrs. Herriott said.

They went upstairs; but Mrs. Herriott was almost immediately called downstairs again.

A VISITOR was standing in the hall, hat in hand, slender and strikingly handsome in a dark and foreign way, with a scornful outthrust underlip and fine dark brows and smooth black hair.

"Mrs. Herriott?" he said. "I am Ramon Honess. I'm sorry to trouble you, but I'm very anxious to see Mme. de Belleforte."

"My sister is sleeping," she said.

"Then may I wait awhile, in case she wakes up?"

"Well, I gave her a sedative. I'm quite sure that she won't wake up till morning."

"I don't want to be a nuisance," he said, "but there's a little package for me. Mme. de Belleforte was to leave it at my hotel as soon as she landed, but"—he paused and smiled—"she didn't."

"Mme. de Belleforte was *very* tired," said Mrs. Herriott.

"Oh, naturally," he said, with almost caressing deference. "But perhaps if you could find my package now without disturbing her, Mrs. Herriott? You see, I'd like to take it back to New York tonight. It's rather valuable."

Mrs. Herriott had endured grief and loss and loneliness and years and years of grinding financial worry without rebellion or resentment. But now, at the end of this most terrible day in her life, she came suddenly to the end of her endurance. She had to get rid of Ramon Honess at any cost.

"If it's a question of money—" she began unsteadily.

"Thank you," he said, "but it's not quite like that. I'll go now, Mrs. Herriott. I'll wait to hear from Mme. de Belleforte in the morning. She has my address. Please don't worry."

He moved forward a little and took her hand; bending his dark head, he raised it to his lips.

She stood until the door closed after him, and then she stumbled up the stairs. She undressed, and all the while tears ran down her face. She got into bed and turned out the light, and the tears still came. But she fell asleep almost at once.

A KNOCK at the door roused her. She sat up. The sun was coming in at the window.

"It's me, Mrs. Herriott. Josie. The policeman is here, and he's brought a doctor. They say they've got to see Mme. de Belleforte."

Here's the end of it, Mrs. Herriott thought. I've got to face it, that's all. But I wish I could have had a cup of coffee.

She put on slippers and robe and went down. Sergeant Tucker stood in the hall with a gray-mustached man who carried a little black bag.

"I've brought Dr. Crowley, Mrs. Herriott," said Sergeant Tucker. "I want to ask Mrs. de Belleforte some questions, and he will be able to tell me if she's fit to answer 'em."

"You can't see her," said Mrs. Herriott.

"Why not?" he asked—and when she did not answer, the two men went up the stairs.

"Which is her room?" asked the doctor sharply.

"There," said Mrs. Herriott. "But you can't go in—"

He rapped briskly. "Doctor!" he announced.

"Come in!" said a voice, and he entered, closing the door after him.

Mrs. Herriott leaned back against the wall. Nobody inside that room could have said "Come in." The room was empty. But in a few moments the doctor came out.

"All right, sergeant," he said. "Mrs. de Belleforte is ready to see you." He turned to Mrs. Herriott. "Nothing much wrong there," he said crossly. "But I'd advise you, madam, not to go around administering sedatives without consulting a physician."

She did not answer. The bedroom door was a little open, and she could hear Tucker's voice in there, and a woman's voice, talking in quiet tones. The doctor gave her a curt nod and went down the stairs.

Sergeant Tucker came out of that room and closed the door. They looked at each other.

"I'd like to know, did you see or hear anything unusual-like?" Tucker said.

"You know what I saw," said Mrs. Herriott.

They were hostile, yet in a way they had respect for each other.

"This is a peculiar kind of a case," he said. "Of course, the doctor hasn't finished the check-up for poison."

"Poison?" She was perfectly sure that he was trying to trap her, and she was determined not to be trapped.

"A peculiar feature in this case," said Tucker, "deceased didn't have any hat. Well, that's not so strange these days. *But* she didn't have any kind of a purse or handbag. You practically never find a woman that hasn't got some kind of a purse along with her."

"It might have been stolen," said Mrs. Herriott.

"That's your theory?"

"I haven't any theory," said Mrs. Herriott. "Now, if you'll excuse me, please—"

"All right," he said, to her surprise and great relief.

She went into her room and stood listening behind the closed door until she heard him go. Then she began to dress in great haste. She crossed the hall and opened that door without knocking. The dark shades were drawn, and in the dusky light she saw somebody sitting up in the bed—some one with light hair loose about her shoulders. She closed the door and went over to the bed.

"Carla?" she said. "Carla, why—"

"Silas told me you'd get into very serious trouble if I didn't help you out, after you refused to identify poor Aunt Madge. Of course I didn't know who it was lying out there. I'd never seen her."

Mrs. Herriott sat down. "Who fixed you up like this?"

"Silas got me make-up from the drugstore. I know how to use it; we learned that in the Dramatics Club. I got by with those two men, anyhow, and Silas thinks we might be able to get away before very long. He thought you might tell people you were taking Aunt Madge to New York for a while."

"No," said Mrs. Herriott. "This can't go on. I shall see Dr. Filson and tell him—"

"Aunt Sharley," said Carla, sitting up, "you've got Silas and me involved—seriously involved. You'll have to talk things over with him. It's only fair. And could I possibly have some breakfast, please? I haven't had *anything.*"

"I'll bring you a tray," said Mrs. Herriott.

It was an immeasurable relief to think that Silas knew all that she had done. Of course he had stood by her, had helped her. He had never yet failed her.

When James had died, Silas had looked after the details, about which she was so helpless. He had since been at her side whenever she needed him. James' estate was, Jeff Quillen told her, not what it should have been; some of his investments had not been sound. But she had been able to help poor Silas through his months and months in the hospital, and to keep Josie, too. Silas was not a person to forget help like that.

She found him at breakfast, and beckoned him into the sitting room. She'd have to tell the police, she said.

"You might be able to explain yourself out of it," he told her. "You might say you were so shocked, so much ashamed of your sister—you might get away with it. But you couldn't explain *me.*"

"Then why did you say you didn't know her?"

"When I found out that you hadn't identified her," he said, "I thought you knew—or suspected, anyhow."

"Knew *what*? Suspected what?"

"I'd rather not tell you just now. If you'll have a little confidence in me—"

"I can't," she said flatly. "I've got to know."

"All right," he said. "That wasn't your sister. She'd got hold of your sister's papers and came here in a hurry to get hold of your sister's money before Mrs. de Belleforte could get here. She told me because she thought she could bribe me to help her. It was me she went out into the street to meet.

"I wanted to hear all she had to say. I wanted to find out all I could. But I missed it. There were other people in it with this woman," he went on. "She had friends here. If we want to trace Mrs. de Belleforte, this is the only way we can do it. If these other people think she's alive, they'll try to get in touch with her, and then we'll get them. But if they know she's dead, they'll never show up and we'll never find out what's happened to your sister. If we tell the police, the whole story will come out. They'll make their own investigation. And maybe that wouldn't be too good for Mrs. de Belleforte."

"I'd like to think all this over, Silas."

But I don't believe a word of all that, she said to herself.

SHE took Carla's tray upstairs. Carla had pulled up the shades and lay back on the pillows. With rouge high on her cheekbones, purple eye shadow, and dark moist lipstick, she was a caricature, a travesty, of Madge.

If Silas told me a lie, Mrs. Herriott thought, he had some reason—some good reason. I can't suddenly turn against him. But this horrible masquerade can't go on! Some one will recognize Carla, or some one will find out who my poor Madge really is.

The doorbell rang, and Josie admitted Captain King of the Carbury police.

Mrs. Herriott had met him before—a tall, heavy man with dark pouches under his sad eyes.

"Sorry to disturb you, Mrs. Herriott," he said as she came downstairs. "But we're having quite a lot of difficulty, and it occurred to me that possibly you could help us."

They sat down together in the sitting room.

"It's a peculiar case," the captain went on. "Carbury's a small place, but nobody is able to identify her. We've been around to most of the boardinghouses, roominghouses, hotels. Nobody missing. Unless something turns up, we've got to assume that she came here by bus or train or car. In that case, we can pretty well take it for granted that she had some kind of purse or handbag. And nothing of that sort being found on or near her, we can pretty well assume that she was robbed.

"The medical officer isn't prepared to state definitely the cause of death, except a blow on the head. This blow could have been the result of a fall, or of a blow with some instrument. She'd been drinking, it seems—"

"But not much!"

"What?" he asked.

"She didn't look—as if she'd been drinking."

"You can't tell by a casual glance, Mrs. Herriott. It's occurred to me, Mrs. Herriott, that since you've done a good deal of charitable work here in Carbury, maybe this woman was coming to you. For some sort of help."

She found nothing to say to that.

"Mrs. Herriott, did she, however remotely, remind you of any one else you have ever seen?"

"No," she said.

"I understand that you wanted her brought into the house, Mrs. Herriott. Now, if you can think of any one

you formerly knew who was the same general type, please let us know. And I hear that Miss Pendleton went back to New York last night. Will you give me her address, please?"

"She's going to visit a friend for a while," said Mrs. Herriott. "But I don't know the friend's name. She'll write to me."

"Did she bring any luggage here, as if she intended to stay with you?"

"Let me see—" said Mrs. Herriott.

"What I'm trying to get at," he said, "is whether anything happened to upset Miss Pendleton—make her change her plans. She may have seen something—may have been looking out a window and seen something that upset her."

When he had gone, Mrs. Herriott went to the kitchen to speak to Josie. In the yard where the clothes were dried, Ferdy stood whirling a lariat around him, sometimes jumping over it. His black hair flopped over his forehead, his dark face glistened with sweat; he looked unusually alive and pleased with himself. Josie was watching proudly.

"Yippee!" he shouted, spinning the lariat up in a spiral and neatly looping it over the top of a clothes pole.

"I'll do the marketing, Josie. I'd like the walk," said Mrs. Herriott, when Josie turned.

She set out with Josie's list, thinking of nothing but her purpose. She was going to see to it that the funeral should have decency and dignity and that Madge should rest in peace in Carbury cemetery. After she had shopped, she turned into Dr. Filson's street and was presently sitting with him in his study.

"I quite understand," he said, when she had stated her errand. "It's a most humane and generous thought. I'll arrange all the details, Mrs. Herriott, as soon as the medical officer will issue a permit."

Mrs. Herriott thanked him and in a few moments rose to go. When she got home, Josie met her at the door.

"Captain King and Sergeant Tucker are in the dining room, Mrs. Herriott," she said. "They've been asking me questions, Mrs. Herriott. Was it all right to tell them about that Mr. Honess who came last night?"

"Why, yes," said Mrs. Herriott. She joined the men.

"What can you tell me about this Honess, Mrs. Herriott?" Captain King asked her.

"Why, nothing," she said.

"I'd like to know just what he said to you, Mrs. Herriott."

"He said that he wanted to see Mrs. de Belleforte, and I told him it wasn't possible, and then he went away."

No matter what he's done, she thought, I hope they'll *never* find out. That would be worse than anything else—for there to be any sort of gossip, any scandal, about Madge and that man.

"I'll have to see Mrs. de Belleforte now," said Captain King.

"I'll see if she's awake," said Mrs. Herriott.

SHE found Carla in her own room, and told her. Carla took off her dress and got out her little make-up boxes from a bureau drawer.

"He wants to ask questions about that Mr. Honess," said Mrs. Herriott. "Perhaps you'd better say he's some one you met quite casually in Paris."

"Yes," said Carla. She crossed the hall to Madge's room and put on the kimono.

When Captain King went in, Mrs. Herriott followed him.

"Good morning," Carla answered his greeting. "Do you mind if I smoke? This is all so ghastly."

She looked up at him, fluttering her purple lids, and brought out a pack of cigarettes from under the pillow. Captain King offered a light; then he sat down.

"Mrs. Herriott told you, of course, about this Mr. Honess who came to see you?"

"Oh, yes!" she answered. "How he ever found me here I can't imagine!"

"Then you didn't expect to see him?"

"Well, no, not exactly. But it's *not* too surprising."

"I'd like to know a little about Mr. Honess, Mrs. de Belleforte."

"I'm so sorry, Captain King, but I really can't tell you much. He's just one of those good-looking boys one meets here and there in hotels and so on."

"I'm very anxious to get in touch with him," said Captain King. "If you can give me any idea—the name of any friend he's ever mentioned—"

"I couldn't," she said, with a laugh. "And the last thing in the world I want is to get in touch with him."

Captain King rose, she held out her hand, smiling and imperious. He coughed, then advanced and took it.

"*Au revoir, mon capitaine!*" she said.

"Er—good morning, Mrs. de Belleforte."

Mrs. Herriott went down to the door with him. He saw through that, she thought. He's a trained observer. He'd never take a girl of twenty-three for a woman of nearly fifty.

"Lunch is ready, Mrs. Herriott," Josie's voice interrupted her thoughts.

Mrs. Herriott turned. "Will you tell Miss Carla?"

"*Miss* Carla is coming down in a moment," said Josie, offended. She had no great liking for Carla—and small wonder. The two girls were of almost the same age, and Josie was really better educated than Carla, more serious, more ambitious. Yet Carla felt herself superior, and showed it. The "miss" had been a mistake.

Oh, how wearisome all this is! Mrs. Herriott cried to herself. When I have this dreadful other thing to think about. And there were so many things to keep straight. So many details to remember. She had had to tell the police that Carla had returned to New York, for fear they might want to question her *and* Madge at the same time. But of course she hadn't thought to tell Josie. She couldn't tell her, rather. How many things had she neglected—?

Carla was coming down the stairs now, blonde and cool and handsome in her dark blue dress. How could she have impersonated Madge so cleverly, so horribly?

After lunch Mrs. Herriott went wearily up to her room. In a few minutes Silas came to speak to her. A faint smile made vertical lines in his lean cheeks.

"There's been an identification," he told her. "I called up a fellow I know in Freeport. I told him that the woman found in the street here looked sort of familiar to me, but that I wasn't sure enough to say anything about it and I'd like his opinion. He was pleased as Punch, just as I expected. As soon as he saw her, he wagged his head. 'Oh, yes,' he said. 'Sure. I know her.'"

"Who did he say she was?"

"He says she's a waitress named Frieda Hoff that he used to see at the Boulevard Barbecue a couple of years ago. And every time he says it he believes it more."

"You must have suggested to him that she was—this waitress."

"Well, maybe she is."

"Silas," she said, "as soon as you and Carla are out of danger of any serious trouble, I shall tell the truth. I couldn't go on *living* if I didn't."

"You'd be surprised—" he murmured.

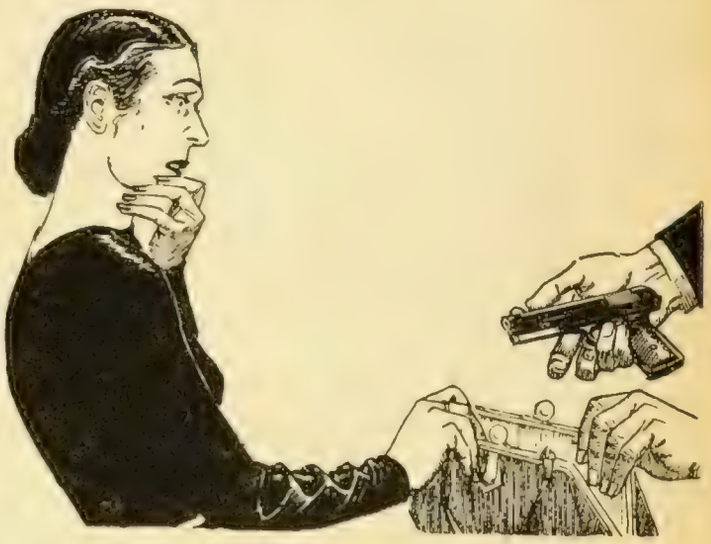
"What do you mean by that, Silas?"

"I mean," he said, "it's a lot easier than you think—to live a lie. Gets to be second nature."

He went out.

The next day began for Mrs. Herriott with Josie's mournful plaint that Silas had said Ferdy must go home.

"Ferdy clings so to me," Josie mourned. "I'm all he's got, poor little fellow. And he *doesn't* bother you, does he, Mrs. Herriott?"



"Of course not, Josie. I'll talk to Silas about it."

"I *wish* you would, Mrs. Herriott. He'll listen to *you*."

Mrs. Herriott had next to cope with Sergeant Tucker, who arrived as she was finishing her second cup of coffee.

"Now, about this Frieda Hoff," he began. "What can you tell me about her, Mrs. Herriott?"

"I never heard of her before," she said.

"Have you ever been tied up with Germans, Mrs. Herriott?"

"Tied up?"

"Ever known any Germans?"

"Certainly," she said. "My father had German business friends. But I don't see why you should think that poor woman was a German."

"Well, I happen to know she was," he said. "She was born over in Hoboken in 1895, both parents German. She left home when she was sixteen-seventeen years old, and went to New York. Haven't got any line on her in New York. No police record. Nothing more till she turns up in East Carbury around four years ago."

There's a real Frieda Hoff, thought Mrs. Herriott, and when she reads the papers she'll come forward.

"She got this job at the Barbecue," Sergeant Tucker went on. "But when she had a couple too many she used to get fresh. So they fired her, and we haven't got any line yet on where she went."

"But you will continue to—to try to obtain a definite identification?" Mrs. Herriott asked anxiously.

"Well, the medical officer's satisfied, and Captain King's satisfied. Accidental death."

"Are *you* satisfied?" she asked.

"Oh, I'm a funny kind of a fellow," he said jocularly. "You never can tell about me." He rose. "I hear you're paying for the funeral. That's mighty kindhearted."

Everything he said was given a sinister implication by his indolent and heavy-lidded glance. He asked, next, to see Mme. de Belleforte.

"I don't know how she's feeling," said Mrs. Herriott.

"All right," he said blandly. "Maybe you'll be kind enough to ask her how she's feeling."

Mrs. Herriott went up the stairs, her heart beating fast. Carla can never fool *him*, she thought.

But Carla was calm and assured. She opened the suitcase that stood on a chair, and took out that pitiable black negligee and got out her make-up box.

WHEN Sergeant Tucker went into that darkened room, Mrs. Herriott stood outside in the hall, shaken with miserable anxiety. It was a very long time, she thought, before he came out. He glanced at her with a sleepy smile and left the house without a word.

"It wasn't bad at all," Carla told her. "He asked about Nazis, mostly. *I* think he's rather stupid."

"Well, he's not," said Mrs. Herriott. "Now you'd better take that thing off, my dear. It's getting on to lunchtime."

She went out of the room, closing the door after her, and met Josie just coming up the stairs, with a woebegone face.

"Mrs. Herriott, Silas just drove Ferdy to the station and put him on the train."

"We'll get him back next Saturday, Josie. I'm very sorry."

"Thank you, Mrs. Herriott," said Josie forlornly.

After lunch Mrs. Herriott retreated to her room to nurse a pretended headache. The relief of being alone was so soothing that she stayed there until morning.

This is the day of my sister's funeral, she said to herself when she awoke. As she came out of her room, Carla met her in the hall. They went downstairs together, where Josie was waiting.

"Doesn't Mme. de Belleforte want any breakfast, Mrs. Herriott?" she asked.

"She had a bad night," said Carla. "She'll be sleeping late. If she wants anything, Josie, she'll call you. But don't disturb her unless she does."

She spoke with authority and none too pleasantly.

"I think," Mrs. Herriott said when they were alone, "that you might be more tactful with Josie, Carla."

"I can't stand her," said Carla. "You've got such an exaggerated opinion of Josie. She's a nasty little thing with a martyr complex."

"Carla, she's been so devoted for such a long time—"

"She's not a bit devoted to you," said Carla. "She thinks you don't appreciate her. I've overheard her say things."

"It's not very nice to repeat things you've overheard," said Mrs. Herriott.

"I'm simply trying to warn you, Aunt Sharley."

"I don't need to be warned against Josie," said Mrs. Herriott. "She's a fine, honest, conscientious girl, and I think *very* highly of her."

Then Silas drove up in the big car. He got out and stood in the rain, holding open the door. They drove sedately to the funeral home. Mrs. Herriott was glad to have Silas there. For this was the supreme ordeal—to look upon her poor Madge for the last time.

What she saw almost stunned her. She saw a lovely and tranquil Madge, ethereal, with delicate brows and a sweet mouth, the bright-gold hair smooth. Immense solace flooded her heart. Madge is at peace, she was saying to herself. Her troubles are over. She did not stir until Silas' fingers tightened on her arm and drew her away. As they turned, some one came in quietly. Mrs. Herriott turned her head and met the black eyes of Ramon Honess.

If he had looked into the casket—and surely he had—then he must know the truth. He'll either tell the police at once, she thought, or he'll try to blackmail me.

But there was no point in waiting. They left as soon as Dr. Filson had completed the service.

On the way home, Silas said, "Mrs. Herriott, we'd better leave tonight. We'll have to manage so that nobody sees us start. Josie had better stay here for the time being."

"Silas," said Mrs. Herriott, "I don't want to be meddlesome, but can't you try to be a little nicer to Josie about Ferdy? Remember that Josie's young—"

"I'm not an old man myself," said Silas, and she said no more.

As soon as they reached home, she called up Captain King and with fine aplomb said:

"We'd like to get away tonight for a little change, if there's no objection."

"Why, no," he said. "No. But I'd like you to keep in touch with us, Mrs. Herriott."

Then she phoned Dr. Filson and told him.

"Mrs. Herriott," he said, "I wish—I wish very much—that you would spare me just a few minutes."

"We're only going to New York, Dr. Filson," she said winningly. "I'll let you know as soon as we're settled. But we're in such a turmoil now—"

She thought, I'm afraid he feels there's something wrong, too. Well, it can't be helped.

She went upstairs to pack, and Josie came after her, offering to help. But Mrs. Herriott did not need her.

"Maybe I'd better tidy up Carla's room."

"Oh, she'll do that, Josie."

"But she's gone, Mrs. Herriott!" said Josie, surprised. "Silas just drove her to the station."

"Oh, yes! I'd forgotten," said Mrs. Herriott hastily. Of course Carla had to be out of Josie's sight before Mme. de Belleforte left the house. "Will you ask Silas to come up, please, Josie?"

"WE can't go tearing off like this," she said when he came into her room. "I'll have to leave money here as well as paying for us in New York, and there's nothing coming in until the fifteenth."

"But I can help you," said Silas.

"I'm not going to borrow from you, Silas. If you've saved anything, it really belongs to Josie. She's scrimped and done without things for a long time."

"This money hasn't anything to do with Josie."

"Then what money is it?"

"*She* gave it to me. To keep for her," he answered, with a shadowy smile.

"That money doesn't belong to either of us."

"All right," he said. "Who does it belong to?"

It belongs to that Mr. Honess, thought Mrs. Herriott. That is, if she really did make that will.

"How much is it, Silas?" she asked, after a moment.

"Couple of hundred."

"Did she—what was the reason she gave it to you, Silas?"

"That's pretty complicated," he said. "Anyhow, you know what she was like."

No, Mrs. Herriott thought, I don't really know what Madge was like! And I never shall.

"I've telephoned for rooms," said Silas. "All you have to do is to go there and take it easy for a while."

"I can't—" she began, when Josie came to the doorway.

"Mr. Honess is here, Mrs. Herriott."

"I'll see him for you, Mrs. Herriott," said Silas.

"No!" said Mrs. Herriott. This was one thing that Silas must know nothing about.

"Please tell me," she said, when they were in the sitting room with the door closed, "exactly what you want."

"I thought," said Mr. Honess, "that perhaps you'd explain—"

"I'm not going to explain the circumstances," she said, "but if you'll go away and keep quiet, I'll give you something every month. I get my check on the fifteenth. It won't be much, but it will be quite regular."

Does he know about Madge's will? she thought suddenly. For, if he did, her offer would be ludicrous. She decided to take an enormous chance.

"It would be very unpleasant for you if there were any

gossip," she said. "I warn you, Mr. Honess, I shouldn't hesitate to tell everything I know about you."

He glanced at her sidelong. His dark face was a mask as he said, "I'd like very much to know your object."

"My object is to protect my sister's name."

"You're willing to go pretty far," he said.

"Yes," she said, "I am."

"If you'll give me my little package, Mrs. Herriott—"

"There are people around now. But I'll look tomorrow."

"Very well, Mrs. Herriott," he said gently. "I'll wait till tomorrow."

He held out his hand. She did not want to take it, but she did so. He raised her hand to his lips, bending his dark head with that grace, that elegance he had.

She finished her packing and then went to that room she still called Madge's. Carla opened the door. She was wearing a suit of brilliant green tussore—a fitted jacket and a short narrow skirt—and a green turban. Her very figure seemed changed.

The likeness to Madge was extraordinary—and profoundly disturbing.

"Where did you get those clothes, my dear?"

"They were in one of Aunt Madge's suitcases. I thought I'd better wear her things, in the circumstances."

Out in the hall they met Josie. She gave a gasp and stood staring.

"Who's this?" asked Carla in a casual and half-arrogant way.

"I'm Josie, madam; Silas' wife."

"Take my bag down, please. Ready, Sharley?"

They went down, and Silas settled them in the car.

WHEN they reached the city and entered the St. Pol, where Silas had reserved a suite, Mrs. Herriott was worried. This luxurious hotel had once been familiar to her. She knew it was far beyond her present means. But Carla was enchanted. She moved about, looking at everything.

Presently a box of flowers was delivered for Mme. de Belleforte. The card inside said:

Welcome home, Madge. I'll call up tomorrow.

JEFF QUILLEN.

"How could he possibly know we're here!" cried Mrs. Herriott.

"Oh, Aunt Madge told me she told lots of people she was going to stay at the St. Pol," said Carla.

If Jeff Quillen ever got Madge's will, Mrs. Herriott thought, he'll begin asking questions about Mr. Honess at once. I can put him off, one way or another. But if he should ever see Carla he'd know at once that she isn't Madge. Well, I'll have to keep them from meeting somehow.

"You'd better take your bath now, Carla, my dear," she said, "and get to bed in good time."

Presently the telephone rang, and it was Silas.

"I've got a room in a little hotel around the corner, the Whitecliff," he told her. "Don't worry, Mrs. Herriott. Don't worry about anything."

Carla came out in a white terry robe, her newly washed hair soft as silk about her face, clean of all make-up now and alive with happiness. She took the telephone from Mrs. Herriott.

"Silas?" she said. "I just wanted to tell you that everything's fine. See you tomorrow, Silas!"

"I thought you didn't care much for Silas," said Mrs. Herriott.

"Well, he is a bit of a wolf—"

"A wolf? What do you mean by that, Carla?"

"Oh, it's an expression, Aunt Sharley. It means a man who sort of prowls after women."

"You think Silas is like that?"

"Well, that's what every one in Carbury says. But I must say he's been wonderful about all this. So understanding—"

"I think I'll take my bath now, Carla."

She ran a bath and got into it. She lay back in the warm water, and at last she was relaxed, as if a little stunned. Silas? she said to herself. Silas a wolf?

WHEN Silas came next morning, he insisted on their going shopping for new clothes for Carla.

"She ought to look nice—prosperous. I'll see to it that expenses don't run to more than we can pay," he said.

The telephone rang just then. It was Jeff Quillen.

"Charlotte—this is Jeff Quillen. How are you, Charlotte?"

"Very well, thank you. How are *you?*"

"Oh, fair to middling. Fair to middling. I was called to Washington suddenly. That's why you didn't hear from me before. I'd like very much to see Madge for a few moments. D'you think this afternoon, perhaps?"

"Jeff," she said with convincing earnestness, "she's very tired. Suppose I let you know later."

"Whatever you think best, Charlotte."

"Good-by," she said, and hung up the receiver.

"You don't have to go shopping with me, Aunt Sharley," said Carla. "Silas can let me have some money—"

But it seemed to Mrs. Herriott her duty to superintend this matter. She had been a notable shopper in her time; she had been thoroughly trained by her mother, and she knew materials, she knew values.

When they were back at the hotel, Mrs. Herriott lay down to rest. She slept—the most refreshing sleep. She waked easily and lay quiet, looking at the pale blue sky outside the window, listening to noises from the street far below. She was city-born and -bred, and this feeling of life streaming around her was familiar and soothing to her. She sighed comfortably—and then she heard a laugh.

It was Jeff Quillen's laugh. He was there in the sitting room.

She got up in haste and terror, and washed and dressed. She opened the door and went in. The heavy blue curtains were drawn across the windows, and in that twilight Carla was lying back in a chair, smoking.

"Charlotte!" said Jeff Quillen, rising. "*You're* looking very well. Younger than ever. I hope you don't mind my coming so soon. I was so anxious to see Madge again."

He was a tall man, lean, his shoulders a little bent, with dark hair worn rather long. He had somewhat the look of an old-fashioned diplomat.

Mrs. Herriott assured him she was delighted to see him and they sat there for a time, all three, carrying on a pointless conversation.

After a little, he rose. He stood before Carla, and she held out her hand to him. She smiled up at him, and he smiled too.

"I'll see you very soon again," he said.

"I'm thinking of going out to the country for a few weeks," Carla said.

"Very sound idea," he said. "Very sound. I'll call you up tomorrow, to see if I can be of any service. Then—au revoir, for the present."

"Au revoir—Jeff," Carla said, fluttering her lids.

"I'll go out to the elevator with you," said Mrs. Herriott.

"Did she mention a will to you, Charlotte?" he said, in the hall.

"I—think so," said Mrs. Herriott.

"Naturally, I was anxious to know something about this—this young protégé of hers. I took it upon myself, Charlotte, to suggest to her that she had acted very hastily and thoughtlessly and with a great lack of consideration toward you. I told her a little, Charlotte, of what you've been through, and of your magnificent courage and unselfishness."

"Oh!" said Mrs. Herriott, surprised and greatly touched.

"In our young days, Charlotte," he said, "I'll admit that I didn't fully appreciate you. But lately, within the last few years—" He rang for the elevator. "I believe that will is nothing more nor less than a whim," he said, "and I believe she's quite ready to alter it. In the meantime, if there's anything that troubles or disturbs you, Charlotte, let me know. Call me at my office or my hotel at any time."

She stood there, when he had gone, cold with dismay. He knows there's something wrong, she thought.

She found Carla in the bedroom, standing before the

mirror, combing her hair. She turned, and under the disfiguring make-up her face was alight and young.

"I ought to get a prize for *that!*" she said. "Aunt Sharley, let's have a drink before dinner. Let's go down to the cocktail lounge. There's music there, and it's lively."

Mrs. Herriott at first refused, but finally, against her better judgment, gave in.

The cocktail lounge recalled to Mrs. Herriott the days, almost like a dream now, when she and James used to go out together—handsomely dressed, important people.

"Two dry sherries, please," she ordered. She relaxed a little then and leaned back in her chair.

"Good evening," said a voice behind her. "May I join you?"

Ramon Honess waited a moment, and then drew up a chair from another table. He smiled at Carla—his ironic smile.

"This is Mr. Honess," Mrs. Herriott explained in a low, unsteady voice. And it was vitally important to warn the girl. "He knows," she whispered.

Carla's face grew white as paper, so that the rouge on her cheekbones stood out vividly.

Honess made a gesture to a waiter, who brought him

a tall drink from another table. They sat there in silence. Then Mrs. Herriott's years of training, of social discipline, began to gather force. She made small conversation and Honess responded. Suddenly Carla got up, knocking against the table so that her glass fell over. Honess rose and remained standing while she hurried across the lounge; then he sat down again.

"It's very close in here," Mrs. Herriott said.

"It is," he agreed, and drew on his cigarette. "Mrs. Herriott," he said, "I don't want to worry you. If I could get my little package—"

"I haven't come across it yet, Mr. Honess," she said. "Perhaps if you'd tell me what's in it—"

"Some emeralds, for one thing," he said. "Yes. One or two rings—things like that."

"Are they valuable?"

"Well, yes, they are," he said.

Is it true? she thought. Or is it a blackmail scheme? She sipped her sherry. She thought it helped her, steadied her.

"I'll see what I can do," she said.

"When you find it, will you call my room? Or leave a message in my box? I'm sorry to cause you any trouble. I have a great regard for you, Mrs. Herriott."

He went away and left her with the empty glass in her hand.

She went toward the elevator with an air of leisurely composure. I don't know what we'd better do, she thought. When she unlocked the door, she heard Carla sobbing. The girl was lying face down on the bed.

"Now, come, my dear," said Mrs. Herriott. "Sit up and dry your eyes."

"I couldn't tell you—how I felt. How cheap and—ridiculous. And he's a horrible man. Sneering. How does he know?"

"Never mind that now. Take off your nice suit, Carla and put on your dressing gown."

While the girl did so, Mrs. Herriott took out of the closet Madge's bag and examined it with the greatest of care. She found no little package.

The telephone rang. It was Josie.

"Mrs. Herriott, it's too miserable and dreadful here! Mrs. Herriott, they made me go down to the police station. You and Carla and Silas have got away from all this miserableness. Mrs. Herriott, why can't I come to New York?"

"I'll talk to Silas, Josie."

"Well, *why*? Why is he the one to decide about me? Mrs. Herriott, really, I can't stay here any longer." Her faraway little voice sounded like a scream.

"Then come here," said Mrs. Herriott, "and we'll see—"

She called up Silas three times, but he was not at his hotel. A half hour later he came to the suite.

"I've found a house for you," he announced gaily. "Just what you want. It's all ready for you to walk into—all furnished. I've paid a month in advance."

"Silas, I must know what my sister gave you."

"It was a present." He smiled. "Now, you just start off tomorrow morning for this little house. We've got to get Carla away from Quillen and from your friend Honess. I shouldn't trust him too far, if I were you."

"Josie telephoned," she said, suddenly remembering

"Did she? What about?" And when she told him, he said, "You've made a mistake—a bad one."

"Why shouldn't Josie come here?"

He was silent for a moment.

"Will you be ready to start by ten, Mrs. Herriott?" he asked, not answering her question. "I've got enough to pay for the whole summer."

"Silas, it's not your money!" she said.

"Mrs. Herriott, I told you she gave me the money. It was meant for a bribe, so that I'd help her in her little scheme. Now that she's gone, why isn't it mine?"

"Silas, I don't believe that."

His face whitened. "Will you go on for one month? Frieda Hoff thought there ought to be a letter from your sister by then."

"You don't believe in Frieda Hoff," she said.

"Give me a month."

And because of her affection for him, because they had already gone so far, because she could not yet see a way out of this situation without the most serious consequences to them all, she said yes.

"And, Silas, will you stop at the desk and engage a room for Josie?"

"No. She can stay where I'm staying. I'll leave word at the desk for her to come over there."

SILAS telephoned up sharp at ten next morning. Carla was not quite ready, but Mrs. Herriott descended to the lobby. Josie, rosy and pretty in a clean white dress and a nice little straw hat, rose from a sofa.

"Silas says he can't wait in here in his uniform, Mrs. Herriott, but I just wanted to see what it was like in a place like this."

"I see!" Mrs. Herriott sat down on the sofa.

Carla appeared then, in a black satin suit with short sleeves and a wide black hat lined with scarlet.

"Ready, Sharley?" she asked, ignoring Josie.

Josie sat in front with Silas, with the glass slide shutting them off, and Carla, sitting beside Mrs. Herriott, took off the big hat and leaned back with a sigh. "Aunt Sharley," she said, "I was looking at you in the cocktail lounge yesterday. You're much more of a woman of the world than I realized."

"Well—thank you," said Mrs. Herriott.

"Aunt Sharley, I've *never* lived!" Carla said with vehemence.

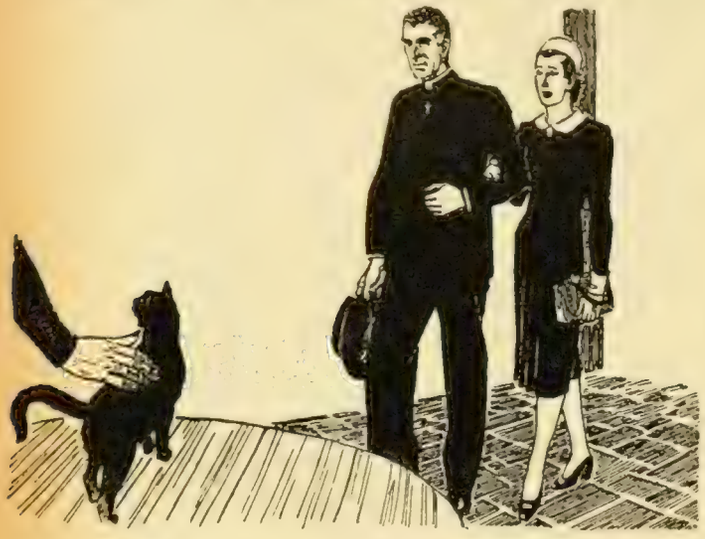
Mrs. Herriott had heard other women say that, and it always had seemed to involve some man. Does Carla know any men? she wondered. She knew one—Silas. There he sat, with his stiff neck and his lean broad shoulders, beside Josie his wife. Carla said Silas was a wolf. Silas had certainly lied, boldly, even gaily. He was using money that didn't belong to him and doing it lavishly. But Mrs. Herriott trusted him—more than any one.

THE heavy old-fashioned car ran smoothly along the roads, past farms, through suburban towns. They came presently to a road along the shore where the sea glittered in the sun. They went up a hill.

"Here we are," said Silas. "How's this?"

"It's a dream house!" cried Carla.

The front door opened into a little vestibule with a side door into a patio paved in red brick, with a fountain in the center, dry now. The sitting room and the dining room opened out of this. Charmingly furnished rooms



they were. The kitchen was all white and red and marvelously up to date.

"How do you like this, Josie?" Silas asked.

"I hate it," she said.

"It's the most convenient, attractive little kitchen I've ever seen in my life," said Carla.

Josie spoke to Carla in French.

"*Très bien*," Carla said, and shrugged her shoulders.

She doesn't understand much French, Mrs. Herriott thought. Josie will see that.

At the end of the vestibule rose a spiral stairway leading to a gallery that ran around the patio.

"Four bedrooms," Silas said, "and three baths."

"Where are the servants' quarters?" asked Josie a little loudly.

"Over the garage," Silas answered.

Mrs. Herriott drew a deep breath and made the effort she thought was her duty.

"You and Silas will stay here, of course, Josie," she said. "We'll pick out our rooms—"

"Thank you, Mrs. Herriott, but I'd *rather* be in the garage," said Josie.

"If you'll bring in the bags, Silas," said Mrs. Herriott, "we can get ourselves settled a little, and then we can go out somewhere to dinner—some restaurant."

"I'll cook dinner here," said Josie. "Silas can drive me to the village and I'll get whatever we need."

"I'd rather go out to eat," said Carla.

"If Josie's kind enough to cook us a nice dinner," Mrs. Herriott said, "we'll all appreciate it very much."

When Carla had settled upon a room and went into it to unpack, Mrs. Herriott followed her and closed the door.

"Carla," she said, "can't you be more tactful with Josie?"

"If you'll notice," said Carla, "*she* starts all these things. She's spiteful and—"

"Carla," Mrs. Herriott interrupted, "you ought to make all the concessions. You have all the advantages."

"Sort of *noblesse oblige?*" Carla asked. "Well, it's rather sweet. I'll try, Aunt Sharley. But if Josie ever finds out the truth about Aunt Madge, you know—she'll make trouble."

They heard Silas and Josie go off in the car, and then there was a heavenly quiet—nothing but the gentle rush of the sea over the sand. Mrs. Herriott went off to her own room.

In a little while she heard a car coming. Then the doorbell rang

She went down the spiral stairway and opened the door. Ramon Honess stood there.

"Mrs. Herriott," he said with deference, "please believe me, I wouldn't trouble you this way if it wasn't a serious matter. But I'm getting into trouble now about that little package. You see, the emeralds are rather valuable, and they belong to my mother. She met Mme. de Belleforte in Paris some months ago. My mother was traveling with such a large party—my three sisters, two maids, and an English governess—she thought she'd be more suspect, with the unbelievable amount of luggage they had, and because she's not a United States citizen. So she asked Mme. de Belleforte to bring the emeralds."

"You mean, smuggle them?"

"I'm afraid so. My mother's a very ethical woman," he said, "extremely truthful and honest. But smuggling simply seems like a game to her. And no doubt Mme. de Belleforte felt the same way. My mother knows Mme. de Belleforte is in this country. There was some one she knew on the same ship."

"I'll have another look—"

"There's one thing I'm afraid we'll have to consider, Mrs. Herriott. Maybe the jewels weren't mislaid. Maybe they were stolen. You have servants, haven't you?"

"They're not servants," she said. "It's a young couple. They're friends, completely to be trusted."

"I see! But there was a boy around?"

"Oh, that's Ferdy. He's Josie's brother—just a schoolboy. He's gone home now."

"Then there's only yourself and this couple?" he asked gently. "And Mme. de Belleforte?"

"Yes—" she answered. She felt about half sick with dread.

"Mrs. Herriott," he said, "please believe me, if those emeralds were mine, I'd rather lose them than trouble you like this. Things are bad enough for you without this worry. I'll try to pacify my mother a little longer."

He held out his hand, and when she extended her own, he raised it to his lips.

"*Dear* Mrs. Herriott," he said. "I'm so sorry."

Her gray eyes, to her horror, filled with tears.

"AUNT SHARLEY?" called Carla's voice. "Please come out here in front of the house a moment! I want you to see something."

Mrs. Herriott opened the door. Carla was standing on the lawn, in a white play suit with a full short skirt, rose-colored linen sandals on her feet. Her light hair was blown with the wind; her face, clear of any make-up, was a little flushed.

"That is my niece," Mrs. Herriott said, and turned to glance at Ramon. In his eyes was a look of bold and joyous surprise.

Then Carla saw him and utterly betrayed herself. She grew white as a ghost.

"Carla," Mrs. Herriott said, "this is Mr. Honess. Mr. Honess, my niece, Miss Pendleton." That was all she knew how to do, or could do.

"Miss Pendleton!" said the young man, going toward her.

She took a step backward, but he advanced. He held out his hand, and when she waveringly offered hers, he raised it, bending his dark head close to it.

"You wanted to show Mrs. Herriott something?" he said, straightening.

"Well—just the—view. The beach."

"It's very nice," he said. "But where I am there's a better—a much better—beach. It's a little hotel called the Casino Monte Carlo—rather pathetic, don't you think?"

"I don't know," Carla said.

Mrs. Herriott stood watching them with a queer detachment. And is this the way those gigolos work? she thought.

She turned, hearing her car coming back. Silas and Josie got out of it and approached her.

"Mr. Honess," she said, "Mr. and Mrs. Polk."

"How do you do, Mr. Honess," said Silas. "We've been trying to stock up."

It made no difference that he wore a chauffeur's uniform and visored cap and had his arms full of paper bags.

Silas could stand before kings. But Carla and Josie looked, Mrs. Herriott thought, like victims.

Ramon said with a boyish eagerness, "Will you come to lunch with me tomorrow on my beach? All of you?"

He looked at Mrs. Herriott. Her eyes said, "I wish you wouldn't ask us."

He stood before her, deferential and gentle. "I'll go now. May I telephone you tomorrow morning?"

"Yes," she said. "Yes, certainly."

She stayed where she was, numb with dread, watching him go. Josie and Carla went into the house, and Mrs. Herriott turned to Silas.

"Silas, we're coming to the end. Mrs. de Belleforte had some—property that belonged to Mr. Honess' mother. Some emeralds."

Silas grinned. "You believe that?"

"Yes," she said. "Do you know anything about any little package addressed to Mr. Honess?"

"I do not. Very likely Mme. de Belleforte never set eyes on him."

"Silas, he saw Madge—in the coffin. He knows what Carla's doing."

"Mrs. Herriott, this lad doesn't *know* anything. He's trying to get money out of you." From his hip pocket he took a little automatic. "I've seen you shoot, and you're good. Take it, please."

He came to her and opened her purse and dropped the gun into it. "Let Honess have his little party tomorrow, and we'll all go. Give me my chance to show him up."

"Let's end this now!" she cried. "Let's tell Mr. Quillen the whole thing."

"After tomorrow," he said. "I'm going to settle this thing, and you're going to win. For years you've been losing out. You've never complained, never blamed any one else, never let any one down. Now you're going to get what's coming to you."

IT was growing dark when Josie came to say that dinner was ready. As Mrs. Herriott started down the stairway, Carla came out of her room wearing a long pale blue evening dress and all that make-up again.

"Carla," she said, "there's no use in that any more. Josie saw you this afternoon."

"I know. But Silas told her Miss Carla had come out for a visit and didn't like it and went home again."

They sat down at the table, laid in the patio. Josie clattered across the tiles.

"I'm sorry if dinner's a little late, Mrs. Herriott, but it's hard, in a new place. And it's such a long way here from the kitchen."

"You should have let us eat in the dining room."

"Miss Carla said she'd like dinner here. Didn't you—*Miss Carla?*"

Carla sat motionless. Josie looked steadily at her for a moment; then she turned to Mrs. Herriott.

"Mrs. Herriott, may I telephone and ask Ferdy to come out tomorrow?"

"Yes, Josie, if you want."

"I'd be glad to feel I had *somebody* who doesn't treat me like dirt."

"Josie, you mustn't say that. Or think it."

"It's true! I try. I work from morning to night. I've tried to save money for you. I've done without everything." She gave a sob. "I haven't one single pretty dress. I haven't even got a—nice pocketbook. And when there is any money, who gets all the pretty clothes—and gets taken to that hotel—"

"Josie—stop!"

"I won't! I won't be made a servant of, while she—"

Mrs. Herriott pushed back her chair and rose.

"You've been doing too much, Josie," she said. "You're overtired. Eat your dinner and you'll feel better."

"But—aren't you going to eat, Mrs. Herriott, when I worked so hard?"

"No, thank you, Josie. Not now. Not like this."

Mrs. Herriott went up to her room and closed the door; she undressed and lay down in the dark, trying to think. But she could not; a great apathy weighed upon her. She was waiting.

At breakfast next morning Josie was volubly apologetic. "I was tired, Mrs. Herriott, but that's no excuse for losing my self-control. I don't often do that. Only, Silas is such a provoking boy. He's all right—*unless* some one encourages him. But that goes to his head.

"Silas is really devoted to me," Josie pursued. "It's just that he's so terribly easily flattered. When any one takes too much notice of him—"

She stopped as Carla appeared.

"Good morning, Josie!" said Carla with almost ominous earnestness.

"Good morning, Miss Carla," Josie answered sweetly.

Oh, thought Mrs. Herriott, now they are going to be polite and contrite to each other. "I have some letters to write," she said, and went upstairs.

In a little while Ramon telephoned. Might he send a car at twelve?

"Thank you, Mr. Honess. That will be very nice."

She went into the kitchen, and there she found Josie washing the dishes and Carla drying them.

"Mr. Honess is sending a car for us at twelve," she said. "Tell Silas, will you, please, Josie?"

"I'm here, Mrs. Herriott," he said from the pantry. "I've been down to the town, and I've brought back a couple of bathing suits for you. You used to be so fond of swimming."

"But, Mrs. Herriott, I don't know if Ferdy'll get here by twelve," said Josie.

"*Ferdy?*" said Silas.

"Yes!" said Josie, with an air of triumph. "Mrs. Herriott said I could ask him. I called him long distance awhile ago, and he's coming right out."

Silas gave her a look and strode out of the kitchen. Josie dried her hands and went after him. She did not quite latch the door. Their voices were distinct.

"I told you I wouldn't have Ferdy around," said Silas. "You've got to send him back."

"You don't want him because he *knows too much*—"

Mrs. Herriott crossed the kitchen to close the door.

"—and if Sergeant Tucker had ever thought to ask Ferdy any questions, he'd have heard some things that would have surprised him."

"You keep quiet," said Silas tensely.

Mrs. Herriott opened the door wide. They stood face to face. She looked at them both with no expression and went past them.

When Josie came to announce the car from Ramon, Mrs. Herriott thought, She's sick with misery and bitterness.

"Mrs. Herriott, Silas wants to drive Ferdy away. But I won't. My little brother, only fifteen—"

"Fifteen?" Mrs. Herriott repeated. "I hadn't realized he was so old."

At this rate, she thought, Ferdy won't finish high school until he's twenty. Ferdy isn't really very bright. But Josie is devoted to him and it's not right of Silas to want to keep him away. Because he *knows too much*. Too much about what?

"I haven't any money at all, Mrs. Herriott. And I'd like to leave two dollars for Ferdy and a note to say where we've gone. I don't *care* what Silas says."

"Yes, yes," Mrs. Herriott said in haste. She opened her purse—and there was the little automatic. She took out the money and closed the purse quickly.

THE others were at the car when she came out to it. They drove off, to Hotel Casino Monte Carlo—a four-story white stucco building on a little cliff. Ramon was waiting in the lounge for them.

He had engaged a suite for the ladies where they could put on their bathing suits, and they went up in the elevator.

"I've brought along both the bathing suits, Aunt Sharley," Carla said, with a sort of timidity.

"I think they're just about what you'd like, Mrs. Herriott," said Josie.

Both of them were trying to placate her. And I'm behaving like an old battle-ax *now*, thought Mrs. Herriott. She tried the suits and kept one on. She had been a fine swimmer in her time, and she had loved it above everything.

The water was cold; she gasped at the first touch of it. Then she began to swim—an old-fashioned side stroke. She swam and swam through the gentle swell.

"Mrs. Herriott!" It was Ramon beside her. "You're rather far out. Won't you turn back now?" His teeth were chattering.

"Oh, I'm sorry!" she said, turning back at once. "You shouldn't have come."

"You're my honored guest," he said. "I'm looking after you."

Silas was sitting on the beach alone, his hands clasped around his knees, the sun shining on his fair head. He was watching her. Josie came out of the water, very pretty in a flowered suit, her midriff bare. Only, after her came Carla in a plain black wool suit, tall, long-legged, and delicate.

She took off her cap and shook her fair hair loose, and she was so much more beautiful that Josie was wholly eclipsed.

The boy from the Casino set up a vast umbrella for them. As two waiters came with trays, bringing a princely lunch, Ferdy came down the long flight of steps from the Casino to the beach in a heavy, penguinlike way.

"Oh, Ferdy!" cried Josie. "Come and sit down, Ferdy. He could take his coat off, couldn't he, Mrs. Herriott?"

"I'll send for some lunch for him," said Ramon.

"I got my lunch already," said Ferdy glumly.

He took off his coat and felt in the pocket.

"Letter I found at the house for you, Mrs. Herriott," he said.

"Thank you," she said, taking it from him.

It had been forwarded from the St. Pol. It had a Portuguese stamp and it was addressed in Madge's writing. She tore the envelope open and took out its single sheet of thin paper.

Dearest Sharley:

"Such a disappointment not to come when I said I would.

"It won't be until September now, because—"

"Mrs. Herriott!" said Ramon. "You look ill. Let me take you up to the hotel."

"No, thank you. I want to go home."

She rose, and was glad to find Silas at her side. She took his arm and they went up the steps.

"When you get home," Silas said, "go to your room and stay there until I get back, will you?"

"Yes," she answered.

Carla followed to help her dress. Then Ramon drove her home. So you *are* a swindler, she thought. She was glad that he did not ask her any questions or try to talk. At the house, he helped her out.

"Thank you," she said. "Good-by."

"I'll stay here, Mrs. Herriott," he said. "If you want me, I'll be here."

"No, thank you," she said, and went up the spiral stair. In her room she read the short letter:

"There have been all sorts of boring complications, about papers and so on, and it really would be wiser to wait until September. But I am so longing to see you, Sharley, and to talk to you. I'll never forget the old, happy days together, will you?"

THE writing seemed to her entirely like Madge's; the words were what Madge might well have used. Oh, if it were only true and all this no more than a nightmare!

Unaccountably, she felt tired and drowsy. The swim had relaxed her.

She lay down on the bed and at once fell asleep. When she awoke, she put on a fresh dress and went downstairs.

Ramon Honess sat at the table in the patio, smoking a cigarette, perfectly quiet in the gathering dusk. He rose

"Have you been here all this while?" she asked.

"I went out for a few moments," he said, "to get some tea and sandwiches for us from the hotel."

He drew up a chair for her, and she sat down at the table. She sipped the tea he poured for her, and found it fragrant and good.

"It's *just* what I wanted," she said. "Thank you, Mr. Honess."

"Nothing could be a greater pleasure than to get you just what you wanted, Mrs. Herriott."

"Thank you," she said again, with the same calmness. "But I must tell you now . I've just had a letter from my sister, Mme. de Belleforte. She's had to postpone her home-coming until September."

In the twilight his dark face looked white.

"May I see the letter, Mrs. Herriott?" he asked.

"Yes," she said, and opened her handbag. There was the little automatic.

Silas asked me to stay in my room until he got back, she thought, and I said I would. But I forgot. What danger is there?

"There's something very wrong here, Mrs. Herriott." Ramon said, when he had read the letter.

"Something very wrong indeed, Mr. Honess."

Both listened. A car was coming.

"Mr. Honess," she said, "you'd better go now. Go out by the side door."

"I'm not going, Mrs. Herriott."

"Don't you realize—" she began.

THEN Josie came running into the patio, followed by her lumbering little brother. "Mrs. Herriott, Silas has gone! He went with *her*."

"Be quiet," said Mrs. Herriott.

"I have my car here, Mrs. Herriott," said Ramon. "Shall I drive you back to the Casino?"

"I'd be very glad," she said. "Ferdy, get your sister a glass of water. Now tell me what happened."

"He said he'd be back—and we waited and waited, Ferdy and I. She's got him! He's left me."

Her voice followed them, piercing and intolerable, as they went out of the house.

"She's very high-strung," Mrs. Herriott remarked, as the car started. "I don't suppose there's really anything wrong."

"Mrs. Herriott," said Ramon, "you've had a very bad time. But you have great courage. If there's any more, you'll have courage for that too."

"What do you *mean*? Why do you think there's—anything more?"

"Mrs. Herriott, your sister's death—it was very strange."

"My sister isn't dead. She's alive, in Portugal."

"You saw her, Mrs. Herriott."

"Why are you saying things like this?"

"Because I'd like to help you to be ready, in case anything else happens. I'll stand by you, Mrs. Herriott."

They had reached the hotel. Carla was standing outside.

"Aunt Sharley!" she cried. "That hateful Josie—"

"I don't want to hear any more of this," said Mrs. Herriott. "Where did Silas go?"

"He just took a stroll along the beach."

"Wait here," said Mrs. Herriott, and went along the path by the side of the hotel and down the long flight of stone steps to the beach.

Honess took her arm. She did not look at him or speak to him. It was growing dark. They came to the end of the crescent beach where the bank became a cliff of stone jutting out like a wall, with a rickety wooden stair down its face, ending in a landing stage.

"Perhaps at low tide any one can walk past here," she said.

"Yes, I've done it," Ramon answered. "But we can go back to the hotel and walk along the top of the cliff, Mrs. Herriott."

"I don't want to take the time," she said.

She stepped into the water that was up to her ankles, piercingly cold. Ramon held her arm again. In a moment the water was up to their knees.

Around the corner of the headland was a beach strewn with boulders, desolate and lonely. Silas was there, lying face down at the edge of the sea, where the waves lapped over him and stirred his hair.

Ramon pulled him back on to the beach; he turned him over so that he lay on his back.

"He's not dead," said Mrs. Herriott.

"I'm sorry, he is. Have you a lawyer, Mrs. Herriott?"

"I don't want a lawyer. Mr. Honess, get a doctor!"

"Tell me your lawyer's name, Mrs. Herriott. Don't give the police any more information than you can help until you have seen your lawyer. The police might be too

curious about your finding two bodies—two deaths by accident!"

She took Silas' wrist to feel his pulse. His long, thin hand was lightly closed over something. She unclasped his fingers. It was a ring. She took it. She hoped that Ramon had not seen.

"Your lawyer's name, Mrs. Herriott?"

"Jeffrey Quillen. He's in the telephone book."

He went off then, splashing through the water.

In Silas' vest pocket she found a wallet stuffed with bills, another ring, two brooches. She put them all into her pocketbook, and sat holding his hand until the doctor and two policemen arrived.

They came down the rickety stairs, with flashlights like glowworms, and they helped her to go up that way. The top of the cliff was unexpectedly close to the little Casino Hotel, brightly lighted now. They went in by a side door, and the manager took them into his small office. He brought Mrs. Herriott some whisky. She had never had such a thing in her life before. It tasted like fire. She choked.

WHEN she was questioned, she really had no trouble with the policeman at all, except in explaining Silas. "He drove my car," she said, "but he was much more than a chauffeur. He did a great many things. Call him my secretary."

"Are there any relatives to be notified, ma'am?"

"His wife," she said. "She's at my house now."

"Mrs. Herriott," the doctor asked, "to your knowledge, did Mr. Polk ever suffer from dizziness?"

"No. But some years ago he broke his neck diving."

"Ah! That might account for it. Some lesion of the spinal cord might account for such a fall."

"He fell?"

"Not much doubt about that," said the doctor. "The wooden railing's been broken up there at the head of those steps. It's a good sixty-foot drop and he landed on the rocks. Death must have been almost instantaneous."

Mrs. Herriott sipped her whisky. The doctor took her home in his car, and after that everything seemed vague until she opened her eyes to find herself in her own bed, with Carla beside her.

"Aunt Sharley," the girl said, "I'm going to look after you. I'm going to be—different. I'm going to be—like a daughter to you."

"Well—thank you, my dear," said Mrs. Herriott, in a panic. "I think I'll get up now, Carla—"

"Aunt Sharley, if you feel strong enough, I want to tell you," said Carla, "I consider myself responsible— about Silas. He went to the top of the cliff to meet me. I knew I was making Josie jealous and miserable—and it just seemed—rather exciting."

She was close to tears now. "Aunt Sharley, that letter wasn't from Aunt Madge. I *forged* it! I got an old envelope from your bureau drawer, and Silas fixed it up. Silas thought that, little by little, he could get you used to the idea that—Aunt Madge wasn't coming back. And he thought you ought to have the money she'd brought with her. He wanted to get you comfortably settled away from Carbury—"

She was crying now, a little.

"But there was something more—he was going to tell me. Only now—he never can. Yesterday, after you'd left, Ferdy started whining for Silas to take him out in a rowboat, and Silas wouldn't do it. That made Josie angry. She kept on and on—you know the way she does, bringing up all the things she'd done for him and the sacrifices she'd made. She said it was his duty to take Ferdy out, and Silas jumped up and said, 'Come on, Carla! Let's take a little walk.' I *knew* I shouldn't have gone. I knew how Josie must feel, sitting there and watching us walk off together. Silas—was sort of fascinating—to me. He asked me to meet him—in an hour. He said he had something he wanted me to keep for him. He said—he was going to get rid of Josie—"

"Carla! What did he mean by that?"

"I didn't ask him. He was in such a queer mood. We just walked to the end of the beach, and then I went up to the hotel to dress, and he went back to Josie. I saw him standing there, and she was looking up at him—"

"Carla, there's the doorbell. See who it is."

It was Sergeant Tucker and Dr. Filson.

I knew I hadn't seen the last of Sergeant Tucker, Mrs. Herriott thought, and she was afraid. She got out of bed at once and began to dress in great haste.

"Carla, my dear, you must not tell Sergeant Tucker anything at all until you've seen Mr. Quillen."

"Aunt Sharley, I'd rather tell the truth—"

"I won't have it!" cried Mrs. Herriott in a voice Carla had never heard before. "You'll have to forget all about your conscience for the time being, and do as I tell you. I'll get the policeman out of the house somehow—onto the little porch. Then, you must come quietly down the sta rs and leave the house by the side door. Go some place where he's not likely to find you right away."

"But, Aunt Sharley!"

"Do as I tell you," said Mrs. Herriott.

As she came down the stairs she saw Sergeant Tucker standing in the patio talking to Josie. Dr. Filson advanced to meet her.

"Mrs. Herriott," he said, "I came as soon as I heard, to see if I could be of any assistance. Sergeant Tucker and I met on the train coming out here," he went on. "I'm afraid Sergeant Tucker takes a somewhat cynical view of our fallible human nature—"

He's trying to warn me, she thought.

"Mrs. Polk'll have to go along to the station," said Sergeant Tucker.

"No!" cried Mrs. Herriott. "It's—inhuman! Not now—"

"Mrs. Herriott," said Josie, "*I* don't care." She looked sulky and nothing more.

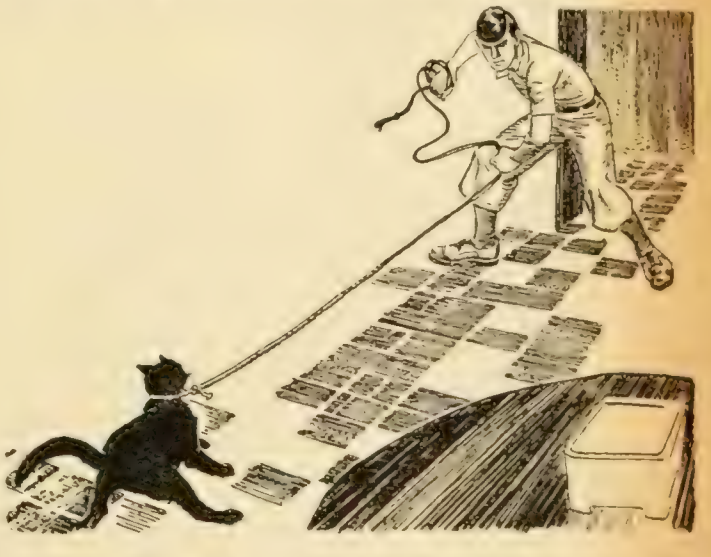
"I'll go with Josie," said Dr. Filson.

Mrs. Herriott and Sergeant Tucker, alone in the patio, sat down facing each other.

"Mrs. Herriott," he said, "if you'd co-operate, it would be a lot better—for all concerned. You knew that I wasn't satisfied with the Hoff woman's death. There was something phony about it."

"You mean *you* think so."

"All right, I think so. And if it had been anybody but you living in that house Captain King would've thought so, too. The woman was O. K. every way—heart, everything. There was nothing there for her to trip over. The medico said she probably must've been running, to fall that hard—if she did fall. All right. Why was she running? And why is it nobody saw or heard a woman running that fast?"



"I have no idea," said Mrs. Herriott.

"So it was decided," said the sergeant, "that either she fell or she got a crack on the head. In all my years of police work I've never come across any one yet that just fell down—that hard. And when I hear that Polk was killed by a fall, it's just a little too much. Even Captain King thought so. He gave me the green light to come on out here."

Mrs. Herriott said, "Silas fell off a cliff—in the dark."

"Couldn't have been pushed off, for instance?"

Mrs. Herriott heard the side door close softly, and she coughed to cover the sound.

"When the police here called us up to get some dope on Polk," Tucker went on, "they told me he was passing himself off as your secretary."

"I told them that," said Mrs. Herriott. "It was the only thing I could think of at the moment to show—how I felt about Silas."

"Well," said the sergeant, "I wouldn't want to spoil anybody's illusions, but I guess there were a good many things about Silas Polk you never dreamed of. Ever occur to you that maybe the Hoff woman was coming to meet him? He admitted he used to know her."

"Sergeant Tucker," she said, "Silas was not a murderer."

"All right, call it an accident. He gave her a shove."

"Then he wouldn't have gone off and left her there."

"All right. Here's another angle. Polk had a jealous wife."

"You're not going to say that Josie ran into the street and hit the poor woman on the head?"

"It's been done," he said. "There's not much a jealous woman won't do. I tipped off the police here to just have a few words with Mrs. Polk."

He rose, and Mrs. Herriott rose too. "How can you?" she asked sternly. "Now—only a few hours after this awful thing? It's brutal."

"Well, the way I look at it, it's brutal to kill people," he said. "It's my opinion Polk and the Hoff woman were both killed. Call it murder if you like. Tell you the truth, Mrs. Herriott, I sort of liked Si Polk and I'd like to get to the bottom of this."

As they stood there, a fine black cat came running across the lawn and leaped up on the porch. Mrs. Herriott liked cats. It came closer, and she scratched the back of its head.

"Is Josie—Mrs. Polk—being arrested?" she said.

"Oh, no. They want to ask her a few questions, that's all." He turned. "Any time you're ready to co-operate, Mrs. Herriott," he said, "you could let me know. Now I think I'll go in and see if Mrs. Polk is ready."

He opened the door, and the cat went in with him. It jumped up on the table in the patio. The door from the kitchen opened, and Dr. Filson and Josie came out. Josie was wearing a black dress with a round white collar. She was wan, her eyes were heavy.

"There's coffee all made, Mrs. Herriott," she said. "Now what's that? A nasty cat!"

"It's a nice cat," said Mrs. Herriott. "Well, Josie, my dear, try not to be too much upset."

MRS. Herriott watched them go. She went into the neat kitchen. She put the coffeepot, milk, sugar, and cup and saucer on a tray and carried it up into her room. She sat down by the open window and drank two cups of coffee.

It was the first moment since going to the pier that she had felt able to look quietly and steadily at her situation.

Sergeant Tucker thinks it's murder, she reflected. Both Madge and Silas. It's hard to believe in things like that, but they happen. In stories, the first question is, Who benefits? There was one person who most obviously benefited by Madge's death.

It was the same person who had been robbed by Silas. It was Ramon Honess.

He was there in Carbury when Madge died. And when Silas died, where was he? I found him here when I waked up, but he admitted he'd gone off in his car to the hotel to get that tea for us. I don't know how long he was gone. But why didn't he take back his ring and other things?

She picked up the tray, to take it down to the kitchen. She opened the door and stepped out onto the gallery. The black cat was up on the table, crouching, bristling, its ears flat. And as she watched, a rope came flashing through the air and caught it around the neck, and it was jerked to the floor and dragged, choking and struggling, across the patio to the doorway, where Ferdy stood.

"Ferdy!" she cried. "Take that rope off at once!"

He stood there, his face sullen. Then he bent and slipped the noose off the cat's neck, and it flew out the door.

"I got no use for cats," he said to her. "They're treacherous."

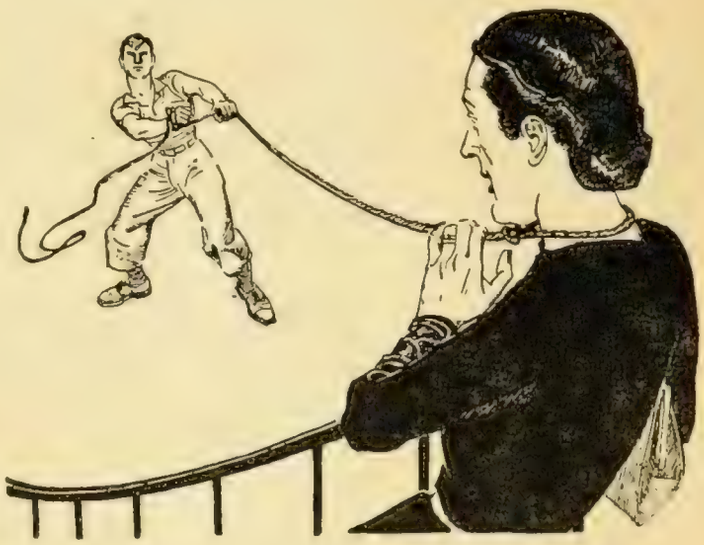
"Nonsense!" said Mrs. Herriott. "Even if you dislike them, you mustn't be cruel to any living creature."

"Animals kill each other, don't they? Well, then! Suppose I was out on the plains—" He swung the lariat in a circle, moving his head quick as a cat himself. "I'd bet you I could bring down a buffalo."

The tray slipped from Mrs. Herriott's hands and clattered on the floor.

"*Ferdy! . . .*"

He looked up at her again. Their eyes met in a dreadful question and answer. Then she knew, and he saw that she



knew, and he came running up the spiral stair. She knew what had brought Madge down—and Silas. But, she said to herself, he must be dealt with as a child.

"Ferdy," she said, "give me that rope."

He did not answer or move; he watched her.

"Give me that rope and go downstairs, Ferdy!"

He dragged the rope in a circle on the floor, and she thought of Madge hurrying out to the quiet, tree-lined street.

There was nothing there to trip her up, Sergeant Tucker had said. But if a rope had tightened suddenly around her ankles—

"Hey! Where are you going?" he demanded as she moved.

"I'm going to get something from my room."

He came after her, and she took up her purse from the table.

"Now, I want you to go downstairs again," she said.

"Well, maybe I don't feel like going downstairs."

"You're behaving very badly, Ferdy."

"Well, I got a right to," he said. "Look at how you always treated me and Josie."

"Do you think I haven't treated you well?"

"*Well?*" he cried with overmastering indignation. "Why, you just make a couple of servants out of the two of us, that's what *you* do. Josie heard you tell people you didn't know how you'd get along without her because she was so cheap."

"No," Mrs. Herriott said.

"What's the idea of your saying no?" he shouted. "I guess you think Josie and me are just a couple of fools! Well, you're wrong."

I have that gun here in my pocketbook, Mrs. Herriott thought. But I couldn't use it against a child.

Ferdy was staring down at his rope. "You never liked me and Josie," he said. "Everybody's been against us! And look at that Mme. de Belleforte! Look how *she* acted. The moment she got in the house, she was after Silas. I heard her, all right. I listened outside the door, before you came upstairs. She was right after him. '*Alors, mon ami, il faut que nous—*'"

He went on in a sudden stream of French.

"I don't understand French, Ferdy," said Mrs. Herriott.

"Well, Silas did, all right," said Ferdy. "Josie took all the trouble to teach him, and then he went and cheated on her. Well, you knew that."

"No, I didn't know that."

"You did, too! You got him away from Josie. You took him and Carla away to a swell hotel. You're a bad woman! Why don't you give Josie that money?"

"What money?"

"What money?" he repeated, in scornful anger. "The money you took off Silas. Anything Silas had ought to belong to Josie. Listen. You give me that money right now, and I'll let you off."

"We'll wait until Josie comes home, Ferdy."

"We will not! Come on, now. What's in that pocketbook? Chuck it over here."

She fumbled at the stiff clasp, and he must have seen her haste and the urgency in her face.

"Stop that!" he cried, in a sudden panic.

She saw him swing the lariat; she saw it spiral upward like a snake; she put up one hand to ward it off. But it came down, around her neck. When she tried to pull at it, it tightened.

"Now you stay still," he said, "or I'll pull you right down the stairs. Now chuck over that pocketbook!" he said.

She got the clasp open then and took out the automatic. She did not aim it, but he was frightened.

"Hey! You put that down!" he cried. "Drop that!"

"Take this rope off me, Ferdy," she said.

"I will not!" he said—but he said it uncertainly.

She had no doubt that he was capable of killing her, but she felt no fear. She felt a great strength rising and rising in her.

"Ferdy," she said, "this can't go on, you know."

"Well, now you'll have a worse down on me than *ever*," he said, afraid to go on, afraid to retreat.

That was what she had to do—to show him a road for retreat.

"I suppose you were playing Indian," she said, "out on the plains—and got carried away by your game. But now you must stop. You must take this rope—"

She stopped, hearing the sound of a door closing below. There was a brisk loud step in the patio. It's Josie, she thought. Oh, thank God! She'll know how to control him.

"Ferdy?" cried Josie. "She's got a gun there! Ferdy, choke her—or something—quick, or she'll shoot!"

For a moment he was motionless. For a moment Mrs. Herriott had her chance. I can't shoot that child, she thought. Let it end.

"Quick, Ferdy, you little fool!" cried Josie.

The noose tightened and she was dragged forward. She let the purse and the gun fall, and clung to the rail of the gallery. But the pressure around her throat was unendurable; she had to raise her hands and try to tear the rope loose.

In a blur she saw Josie's face, looking up eagerly, with parted lips. She was jerked forward.

"Estop!" cried a ringing voice.

Josie gave an ear-splitting scream, and Ferdy dropped the rope and ran down the stairs.

Holding to the rail, Mrs. Herriott sank down on the top step.

SHE slipped into complete unconsciousness for a time. But when she came back out of that, some one raised her head. A spoon touched her lips. With her eyes closed she swallowed—delicious pungent syrup. She sighed and stretched out, so comfortable, floating gently up and down—so comfortable . . .

There was a pink-shaded lamp lighted. There was a nice little nurse in white sitting beside the bed, who rose and opened the door to another room.

"She's awake now, Mrs. Jones," she said. And a woman came in—a woman a little stout, but bearing herself like a queen, in a sweeping negligee of black satin, her abundant dark hair beautifully dressed. Her black eyes were magnificent.

"You are rested," she said, sitting down on the chair by the bed. "That was my own medicine I asked the doctor to give you. I travel always with thees medicine, also many others, and if any one is ill, I 'ave always the right thing."

"I see!" said Mrs. Herriott. "Thank you."

She was in a very agreeable room, large, prettily furnished, with three windows where bright chintz curtains were drawn.

"Mrs. Jones?" she said. "Was it you who came in?"

"It was I," Mrs. Jones answered gravely. "I 'ad come to pay you a little call. I found the door open. I walked into the patio, and I saw—"

"Do you know whether the police have made any arrests?"

"I know everysing," said Mrs. Jones. "I 'ave given orders, my dear Mrs. 'Erriott, that you shall not be disturb until we 'ave 'ad a talk together. I think it is much better if you 'ear all this from me. Yes. The police 'ave arrested your two wicked servants."

"Ferdy—is only a child; only fifteen."

"He is a wicked little snake," said Mrs. Jones. "It is better if he does not grow any older."

"I've known them since Ferdy was a little child."

"IT is a terrible thing when some one trusted turns against you," said Mrs. Jones soberly. "But that woman—that Josie! She escreamed that she did not have enough fine clothes and that you did not allow her to live in some fine 'otel. Also she escreamed against 'er own 'usband. She tells the police that poor Mme. de Belleforte ran out into the street to meet 'er 'usband and make love with 'im."

"No!" said Mrs. Herriott.

"But of course not, dear Mrs. 'Erriott. We know, do we not, that people do not meet in the street to make love. No; I think they were meeting only to talk a little where nobody would 'ear. But that little wicked Ferdy 'as already 'eard that they arrange a meeting, listening outside poor Mme. de Belleforte's door. 'E tells the police 'e is afraid 'is sister's 'usband will run away with Mme. de Belleforte. 'E says 'e did not mean to kill 'er, but only to pull 'er down and stop 'er."

"And Josie knew?"

"They both say no, she did not know until you came out 'ere, and then 'er 'usband told 'er, so that she would send away that boy. 'Er 'usband knew what this boy 'ad done, but I think the poor man wished to protect 'is wife. Only 'e wished much more to protect *you*. 'E did some bad things, but 'e was always faithful to you."

Mrs. Herriott was silent.

"This woman," Mrs. Jones went on, "tells the police that 'er 'usband was wanting to run off with your beautiful niece, and only 'er brother stopped 'im—with that rope."

"That's not true about my niece!"

"But I know it is not true, dear Mrs. 'Erriott. Then, I was speaking with your lawyer—"

"Jeff Quillen? Is he here?"

"But certainly 'e is 'ere. It is 'is duty to be 'ere. 'E is employed by you for such duties," said Mrs. Jones. She laid her hand over Mrs. Herriott's; a beautiful hand, beautifully kept. "I 'ave told your lawyer it is better if I talk to you first. Please believe that I understand 'ow you are feeling about poor Mme. de Belleforte."

Mrs. Herriott could not speak.

"You must forgive me," Mrs. Jones said, very gently. "We are of an age to know the world, you and I. It is sad—but poor Mme. de Belleforte too much liked young men. She gave money—and she gave the jewels that were not 'ers to that man Silas to keep safe for 'er. I think maybe 'e would have given them back to her. Only, when 'e saw her dead, 'e thought, 'Ere is my chance. 'E wished to do very much for you. Your beautiful niece confessed to me. But there was not some illicit amour, dear Mrs. 'Erriott."

"I know *that!*" cried Mrs. Herriott. "Carla is—a very good, fine girl."

"Oh, yes," said Mrs. Jones. "I like 'er very much. Now, dear Mrs. Herriott, let us finish with all that is disagreeable. Your lawyer is *quite* clever, I think, and most devoted to you. 'E is going to tell the police that the shock of poor Mme. de Belleforte's death a little unsettled your

mind. And your niece will say she made her deception because she feared to make it more unsettled. And your friends will stand beside you. Your niece, who loves you very much; your clever, true lawyer; your good, kind clergyman—"

"Is Dr. Filson still here?"

"They are all waiting to see you. I 'ave invited them all to dinner. It will be served in my sitting room, so that you need only go two steps from your bed, dear Mrs. 'Erriott."

"Mrs. Jones, excuse me, but—who are you?"

"I? But I am Ramon's mother."

"Oh—I didn't know, because of the different name."

"It is the same name. Only in Cuba we pronounce Jones 'Honess.' The father of my 'usband was a North American, and I 'ave sent my children to school and to college 'ere. Ramon is the youngest of my sons. I 'ave four sons and two daughters, and I am five times a grandmother."

"That must be very nice," said Mrs. Herriott, and after a moment: "The emeralds, Mrs. Jones?"

"I 'ave them. And I 'ave talked to your lawyer about Mme. de Belleforte's will. We 'ave decided to let it stand. It is easier so. Then, when Ramon receives this money, we will return it to you. You will understand that Mme. de Belleforte a little misunderstood my son. 'E is a very polite boy and *quite* 'andsome, and sometimes a woman of a certain age—" She shrugged her shoulders and raised her dark brows. "The money of Mme. de Belleforte is yours, Mrs. 'Erriott. And your lawyer says it will be something really quite good."

"I don't—care about that," said Mrs. Herriott.

"Later, when there is not so much sadness, it will be different," said Mrs. Jones. "You must then come to visit us in Cuba, and you must bring your beautiful niece. My son already admires 'er—only not so much as *you*. 'E told me that never in his life was 'e so touched as when you said to 'im: 'Ramon! I protect the honor of my sister at any cost!' "

Mrs. Herriott found it difficult to recognize herself in this presentation.

"Well—" she said. Then it occurred to her to ask, "Where am I?"

"In the 'otel Casino Monte Carlo," said Mrs. Jones. "And, dear Mrs. 'Erriott, your lawyer and your clergyman will soon be quarreling over you."

"Mrs. Jones, they never dreamed— They're not!"

"Dear Mrs. 'Erriott, you will permit my maid to come and dress your 'air?"

THE END

BOOKS IN REVIEW

By E. A. PILLER

LUDWIG BEMELMANS has been writing amusingly for some time now. Most of his writing, like the decors he describes—and the food, and the people—is a little too rich for the popular taste.

But with his latest book, **Now I Lay Me Down to Sleep**, Mr. Bemelmans must be reckoned a popular novelist. This book is typical Bemelmans, but it is Bemelmans with a story, with clever caricature and satire, and with as many laughs as ever.

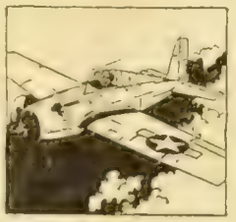
The character around whom the story revolves is one Leonidas Erosa, aging, rich, the possessor

Ludwig Bemelmans

of great estates and herds and wealth in Ecuador, a bon vivant, a gourmet, a connoisseur, and fabulous purchaser of wine and women, self-centered, self-indulgent, occasionally generous, occasionally religious, a man accustomed to having always the best and to acquire it by paying for it, an epileptic, a pseudo-philosopher on occasion, and a General by virtue of an honorary title conferred by the Argentine Republic.

The General (as he liked to be called) was living comfortably at Biarritz with a considerable retinue until war made him move. He journeyed to the United States, spent a couple of months in New York, and then moved on to his native Ecuador. On these journeys he was accompanied by Miss Graves (one of his oldest retainers), who was, in turn, accompanied by her coffin, since she had a penchant for suicide and had to be restrained more than once. He had also a chef, an Indian bodyguard who cared for his dogs as well as for the General, a dark beauty whom he collected en route—and provisions enough to last an ordinary hotel a lifetime.

Jane's All the World's Aircraft



Cushioned by his money, the General moved through his adventures and affairs, even his epilepsy, even earthquake, until his bizarre end overtook him in the gaudy baths of his Ecuadoran villa. But it is not so much the events as the people you meet that make this a fascinating book, an amusing excursion into another world.

There is one scene—the description of the Kiss Royale, a super-plush New York night club, and its denizens—which superbly satirizes the lusher café society, and which is likely to raise the boiling point of several well known New Yorkers who will probably see themselves therein.

It is a tribute to Bemelmans that he can take this assortment of hothouse characters and work them into such a good, such a diverting story.

Published by the Viking Press, New York. Price, $2.50.

WHEN you have finished poring through one of the impressive Jane's volumes, you are not only aware that a staggering amount of information is crammed into it, but you also have the wish to return to its pages—as much to add to your knowledge as for technical reference.

The volume which now calls forth this praise is **Jane's All the World's Aircraft**, edited by Leonard Bridgman, the 1942 edition revised and issued in 1943. It is as up to date as war and time will allow and packed with vital and interesting information.

Besides listing, illustrating, and giving the specifications of almost every type of airplane for every country, it contains a review of air power for 1942, information on the set-up of the various air services, and a listing and illustrating of the aero-engines for most countries.

Published by the Macmillan Co., New York. Price, $19.

SALUTE TO A CLEAR-HEADED AMERICAN

The Victory Gardener

Not he alone, nor the family that gathers
at his table —
But all men everywhere, fighting for
Freedom's cause,
Are richer for his work.

For the food he does not buy is theirs to have . . .
In camps, in ships on every bloody sea,
On battle fronts where food is life itself . . .

And in those dark and hungry lands
now being freed —
Where food is more than life . . .
Where food means tyranny's long hoped-for end.

The seeds of Victory are planted in his garden,
And he will harvest them with all his will!

He is a Clear-Headed American.

Published in the interest of the home front war effort . . . by the makers of CALVERT

Calvert Distillers Corporation, New York City

NINE SECONDS FOR LOVE

Continued from Page 24

night of Dakota, when the lid blew off, and he and Ilsa took thirty curtain calls after their dance. When it was all over, he'd held her in his arms.

"We've made it, darling! Now we can get married!"

"Good heavens, no!" Ilsa said crisply. "Not now. You know what we agreed—it never works, and the going is even harder at the top. We're dancers, Ted, not lovers—"

It was the one point on which she was obstinate to a degree beyond good sense.

About all other matters Ilsa was extraordinarily wise. Ted had known this from the day Solly Meyer had sent for him, two years ago—or was it two centuries?—and said, "This kid is good, but no looks. Maybe with a handsome dancing partner like you, Ted, we got us a team."

Ilsa, sitting there in Solly's office, never batted an eyelash. She took it, dead pan, looking Ted over with those green eyes of hers.

"I'm no cover girl," she said, "but you certainly make up for it! Did your mother meditate on the Apollo Belvedere before you were born?"

"You see?" Solly said, waving his hands unhappily. "She knows things. She has ideas. Very dangerous! But I tell you, she can dance."

Ted was intrigued. Every theatrical hoofer knew not only that Ilsa Brent could dance but also that she was the smartest choreographer America had yet produced. She had several spectacular shows to her credit, but she had never hit the jack pot. Neither had Ted—and he was willing to try anything once.

But Solly was right: as a dance team, they were a success from the beginning. Ted found Ilsa wonderful to work with. She was tireless, resourceful, overflowing with energy, and she was the squarest shooter, male or female, he had ever known—until he fell in love with her. In the matter of love, Ilsa was so far off the beam it was tragic.

"You know we couldn't dance the way we do if we didn't love each other!" Ted kept telling her, amazed that any one as smart as Ilsa should not know this simple fact of life.

But she retorted invariably, "And you know what would happen to our dancing if we did. Look—in the gutter—at the people who have tried it!"

Unfortunately, statistics were on her side, not his. And oddly enough, it was Ilsa's very coldness that had sown the seed of the Mayan ballet which had lifted her to stardom.

ONE night, after hours of bad rehearsal, when nothing would go right, she had cried out to Ted, "What's the matter with us?"

"That's easy," he told her. "You're as unresponsive as a mummy."

He would never forget how she stood still, her eyes beginning to glow, her red hair plastered close to her head in tight curls. "A mummy," she breathed. "But, Ted, that's exactly what I've been wanting for the new ballet! A mummy, a Mayan princess, buried for a thousand years in the Dakota hills, and an Indian hunter comes and wakes her with a kiss—you know, the good old Sleeping Beauty formula, all American and up to date! Come on, we're going to *dance* this one—"

They had danced it, and Dakota, as every one knows, was the hit show of the year. It was in their tenth triumphant week that Ted's draft number came up with a crash, and his understudy took over. . . .

There was his cue, the blare of the hunting horn. Automatically Ted leaped into the waiting spot and began the routine of the disappointed hunter who at the end of a bad day has bagged no game and has only a single arrow left. The steps came back easily to memory; he was a bit stiff and clumsy and slow, but Lord, how good to be dancing again! There was plenty of humor in the hunter's solo—Ilsa had seen to that—and the men caught it, liked it, and laughed. But under cover of the drums Ilsa's voice came softly, petulantly, from the shadows:

"Don't you even know where your feet are? Loosen up, Ted, for heaven's sake! You're terrible!"

"Forget it," he threw back. "It doesn't matter. They didn't come here to see me!"

"You're not trying!" she insisted.

Anger boiled up in him. What did she expect, after eight months in uniform? She knew he'd refused a part in Hello the Army, which, he had figured, would only be putting off what had to come sooner or later, so why prolong the agony? Then they'd sent him up for Officers' Training, and assigned him to Air Force Intelligence. He'd worked like the devil—and a dancer knows how to work. And then, when he got his gold bar, they'd sidetracked him to this hellhole in the wilderness, where all he had to do was supervise fingerprints, stamp gate passes, and watch the big bombers being taken up and set down a thousand times a day.

Ilsa's voice pulled him sharply back; he *had* forgotten: "Ted, wake up! The arrow—watch your cues!"

Just in time, he shot his arrow at the brightening moon. The music crashed into its first climax—the earthquake, supposedly jarring the stones loose from the pyramid. The brightening moonlight revealed Ilsa lying there, utterly still. The illusion was complete; she wasn't human. This *was* the mummy of a Mayan princess dead for a thousand years.

Even the hard-boiled audience of Broadway had risen to the lure of the ancient familiar fairy tale, the Sleeping Beauty. And here at Dover Field, where the men were beauty-hungry, woman-hungry, tense and overtrained, the roar that went up at the sight of the prone princess shook the battle murals on the walls and threatened the roof struts.

THE heat of it mounted to Ted in a warming wave, loosening his taut nerves, clearing the clogged lines between his mind and his feet. He probably went a little mad just then, because the roar from out in front took the form of words.

"There's your woman," it said. "Let's see you get her, or we'll come up there and take her away from you!"

It was so real that Ted muttered, "I'd like to see you try it!"

As he began to stalk the sleeping princess, the old fire was burning in his veins. This was a tricky bit of routine; they'd had no end of trouble, originally, getting it right. "He wants her, but he thinks she's dead, and he's terrified," Ilsa had said. "Then gradually desire breaks down his fear, and he kisses her. *Dance* it, Ted—"

With high-kneed stealthy steps he

(*Continued on page 50*)

THE GIRL OF THE MOMENT, WITH THE LOVES OF THE YEAR— IN THE PICTURE OF A LIFETIME!

"Lady in the Dark"

Paramount's *Technicolor* Triumph
filmed from the celebrated stage success

Ginger dances

She's a minx in mink with a yen for men!

. . . the thrilling, startling story of a woman's secret loves, filmed in breath-taking technicolor, sweet with music and filled with scores of gorgeous girls in stunning gowns, and hundreds of extras in dazzling scenes!

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GINGER ROGERS
RAY MILLAND · WARNER BAXTER
JON HALL

She gave him the business and sat on the floor!

In 27 languages she couldn't say no!

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A
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PRODUCTION

Directed by MITCHELL LEISEN • Screen Play by Frances Goodrich and Albert Hackett • Based Upon the Play by Moss Hart • With Music by Kurt Weill and Lyrics by Ira Gershwin

(Continued from page 48)
approached, withdrew in panic, and moved closer again, only to back off, awed and afraid. He was really dancing, the last of the stiffness leaving his body. He put over the final steps of his solo with all of his old skill plus something new—something he was getting from those boys out there. He could feel them changing as he danced; he had them licked; now they were with him and not against him. They were even egging him on—exactly at the crucial moment somebody shouted, "Go to it, brother! She's only foolin' you!"

A howl went up. The hunter bent over the princess, gave her the kiss of resurrection. Ilsa opened her eyes, turning her head so that every man in the theater was convinced that she was looking directly at him.

This was a shock; the men fell silent, waiting. So far, so good, the abrupt silence said. It's up to you, hunter—

The cues were coming smoothly now. The hunter set the drowsy princess on her feet, catching her as she toppled. He taught her first to walk, then to run, and then to dance, stripping her of band after band of colored stuff, down to the Mayan version, in gold, of a modern bathing suit. Last of all he tore the silver wrappings from her head, and out tumbled Ilsa's hair, copper red and gleaming.

Then they were dancing together, he and Ilsa, with all the perfection of unity they had achieved. It was still there, that unity—nothing could kill it, not war, nor time, nor anger and misunderstanding. They danced in utter silence, as they always did when everything went well, and everything was going superlatively well. Twice Ted threw her into the air and caught her. Drop her?

Their co-ordination was just that one degree beyond perfection known only to dancers or musicians manipulating their instruments in tune with Time itself. The rhythm mounted; they were pulling the orchestra along with them. And suddenly Ted remembered, with a stab of sheer agony, that dance was nearly done.

With the climax, the princess in his arms, fully won, the lights would go off for ten seconds, and when the lights came on again they would have broken apart to take their bows, and nothing could be done about it. Or—could it? There was one thing he could do, with everything that was in him, and he would—

The music, inexorably, was giving the orders. The hunter raised the princess above his head, holding her there, poised horizontally. Slowly he drew her down, while a single violin played a gradually fading echo of the love theme from Tristan and Isolde, and the lights began to dim. Then he knelt, so that when the darkness and the silence fell together, she was lying in his arms, fully surrendered, and he was bending over her in triumph.

They did it faultlessly; the timing was perfect. Applause thundered through the dark.

This was what Ted had been waiting for. *Nine seconds.* He crushed Ilsa in his arms with a violence of passion he didn't know existed in the world. At least he would have this to remember tomorrow, and the day after, and all the other days that stretched blankly ahead. He went on kissing her, some part of his mind mechanically counting *—three—four.* Ilsa's mouth was trembling under his, and there was a taste of salt. Whose tears, he wondered, hers or his own?

Ten—he let her go. He had always had to let her go, and this time it was forever. But to his utter astonishment she clung to him, and she was sobbing; the tears were real, and they were hers.

And the lights did not come on.

"Oh, Ted darling," she was saying incoherently, "I've missed you so—I can't let you go again, I can't—I can't!"

When Special Service came to, and switched on the big white spot, they were very close together, and the audience found this entirely to its liking.

AND when it was all over—when he and Ilsa stood together in the chapel, with the words "man and wife" echoing down the aisle behind them, Ted still was not quite sure whether he was awake or dreaming. They had borrowed the chaplain's car and driven ten miles to the county seat for their license, while the chaplain and his pretty wife put flowers on the altar and the quartermaster broke into the PX for the tray of wedding rings. And as Ted stood there in a daze, with Ilsa on his arm, his major ambled up, kissed the bride with enthusiasm, and said to her in the tone of a fellow conspirator, "Now I'll let him have it."

He turned to Ted, and gave him a paper. "Sorry to lose you, Young, but foreign service gives you ten days' leave. Might come in handy for a honeymoon."

Ted read the paper, blinked, and read it again. His orders at last! Then he looked down into Ilsa's eyes. They were warm and misted, and very beautiful.

"You knew?"

She nodded. "The major told me at dinner. That's why I was so furious when you were late. There was so little time!"

THE END

COMBAT PHOTOG ON TARAWA

Continued from Page 19

him. When it was over he said, "Will you recite the Lord's Prayer with me?" And while sniper bullets moaned overhead, we whispered the prayer together. I felt better.

Before the night was over four Japs sneaked through our lines to one of the wrecked landing barges and opened up on us with our own machine guns. They sprayed the beach, and marines on their way to the front dropped right and left. The nest was finally located and planes were called. They blew the Japs to bits.

Early on the morning of the second day our advance was held up by a huge pillbox in the center of the island. I received permission from Major Crowe to go up there and, with another man, leapfrogged from foxhole to foxhole.

Marines were bringing up tanks and 75-mm. guns to the fortlike structure. It looked like a huge sandy mound. The Japs were firing through steel openings, but before long our guns closed them with direct hits. Then the Marines charged.

They were led by a tall, lanky Southern lieutenant. I can still see him climbing up the side of that sandy hill, twisting about to shout to his men:

"Keep going! Keep going! They're on the run! Come on! Come on!"

He reached the top, surrounded by his flame-throwers, and I could see him waving his hands; but his commands now were drowned out in the screaming and firing. I was working my camera as fast as I could feed it film.

THE action was short-lived. The Japs, streaming out of the rear exits of the pillbox, were hit by the flame-throwers. They seemed to fall apart as they ran through the jets. Riflemen and machine-gunners took care of the rest.

Unhappily, the lieutenant didn't live to see it. A Jap sniper had killed him.

I crawled around our left flank and found two marines calmly machine-gunning the Japs trying to escape from that pillbox fortress. They were working like well oiled robots. One loaded while the other fired. Said one, "Boy, oh boy, a cameraman! Hey, how about a picture?"

I took it. I saw another marine whose rifle had jammed. He pounded it with his fist, shouting, "Fire, damn you, fire!" It fired, but not before a bullet tore away the canteen hanging from his belt.

The next day I went sniper hunting with my camera. The marines I was with blasted the Japs out of holes with flame, bullets, TNT, and hand grenades. Some of the Japs committed suicide by pulling the triggers of their guns with their toes. Nearly all the pillboxes we inspected were heavily scented and had large stores of saki and Jap beer. Most of the dead Japs were Imperial marines. There were none of those puny bespectacled Japs people talk about.

We had the airport now, and planes landed despite heavy sniper fire. It gave us a lift to see those babies roar down out of the sky.

Then suddenly, on that third day, I knew I was hungry. The last meal I had had was aboard ship. I opened my rations and gulped down some sausages. It's the one pleasant recollection I have of the battle of Tarawa.

THE END

URGENT! Said the Navy

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TUNE IN MAJOR BOWES EVERY THURS., CBS, 9 P. M., E. W. T.

SECRET MISSION OF THE MARS

Continued from Page 27

Now we were sliding through brilliant sunshine. The stinging cold of the North Atlantic was giving way to the warmth of the South. At six thirty in the evening of that first day out it was Puerto Rico 367 miles off there to the west—and supper of liver and onions, bread and butter, sliced pineapple, and coffee.

Radioman Howard Bowman had been sending position reports back to Patuxent every two hours during the day, but we cut that out at nightfall. We were over submarine waters. Subs could figure out where we'd be next day and one might be there to give us an explosive greeting. The radio was silenced and the forty-five ports blacked out. The ship was invisible from the outside. It was eerie droning along hundreds of miles out at sea.

AT midnight Trinidad was 450 miles to the southwest, and some of the crew members dropped off for catnaps. But nobody slept very long and the skipper didn't sleep at all. For some hours now a head wind had been belaboring the Old Lady. It looked as though she'd have to admit defeat. Their heads bent over a dim light on the flight deck, the skipper and the others figured and scratched all during the early morning hours, trying to hit on a way to make the gas last out.

Meanwhile, Chief Perry, sweating profusely, had been crawling in and out of the wings to inspect the engines, although there was never a falter in their steady hum. We were all pretty grim, but the incurable hunch players among us were staking our chips on another good omen. At one o'clock Lieutenant Witherspoon had taken a navigational fix—on the planet Mars!

At seven o'clock Wednesday morning, the second day out, we passed the mouth of the Amazon, 400 miles to the west. Then, one hour later, the Old Lady was off Belem, Brazil—and the skipper's formula for a reduction in cruising speed had worked. There was enough gas left to go the whole hog.

A couple of hours later, as the Mars crossed the equator, Skipper Coney took time out from his sleepless worrying to soak down Chief Perry's pants pocket. Then back to the bridge and, about one o'clock in the afternoon—"Land, ho!"

It was the hump of Brazil, about fifteen miles east of Macau. It was spring down there and hot. Long ago we had shed flight jackets, shirts, and ties. First land was beach piled high with sand dunes; then flat, rolling prairie with mountains in the distance. The thin silver thread in the distance grew into yarn, and then rapidly into the river at Natal. Yes, there was a bridge.

Coolly the skipper circled the area, checked wind and surface. So swiftly and slickly did he come in for the landing that most of those hunched behind him on the flight deck didn't know the Old Lady was on the water. Then Coney turned and said: "Well, boys, we made it. Thanks."

We had made it—in twenty-eight hours and twenty-five minutes. Before departure the skipper had filed a flight plan estimating that the trip would take twenty-eight hours. Twenty-five minutes late on a 4,375-mile journey! That's close figuring.

As the crowing engines pulled the Mars toward the launch speeding out to direct us to a mooring buoy, Tex Witherspoon said dryly: "Skipper, there was only one thing wrong with that landing you made."

"What's that?" asked Coney.

"The silly grin on your face."

We remained in Natal two days. High Brazilian government officials and Army and Navy officers inspected the ship in the harbor and gawped unashamedly at the big-bosomed bird. We figured a celebration was in order, and the whole gang went to the best restaurant in town, Dollie's. Dollie is an Englishwoman and she treated us royally. Everybody had steak. Our Navy officer guide waited diplomatically until we had gorged ourselves, then undiplomatically told us that our steak was burro meat. We still don't know whether he was kidding.

When we left Natal for Belem, Brazil, we were carrying 23,000 pounds of cargo. The flight took us straight over the Amazonian jungles. Towering cumulus clouds forced us up to 10,000 feet for safety, but the hop was uneventful, and we spent the night refueling and loading more cargo on the broad Amazon in front of Belem.

In the morning we were ready to smash another record. Our destination was Port-of-Spain, Trinidad, 1,200 miles to the northwest, and we were stuffed with the greatest air cargo load ever carried, 35,000 pounds of precious war materials. We had an uneasy moment. The Amazon's surface was like glass, there was no wind, and the muggy equatorial atmosphere took some power from our engines. It took us two minutes and eighteen seconds to get off, but the Old Lady made it, and again we were over the jungle, the Guianas, Devil's Island, Georgetown, Paramaribo.

We flew into Port-of-Spain that afternoon, and the next morning got a real scare. As we waited for daylight to get under way for Bermuda, a small boat ran into our starboard wingtip float and damaged it. There was danger that it would ship water and drag the 100-foot wing under the surface. Half a dozen of the crew, with split-second reaction, raced to the cargo hold, grabbed the first bags at hand, hauled them up through the two decks, and dumped them on the opposite wing. That raised the damaged wing safely in the air.

Later, in daylight, we discovered that the 100-pound bags contained tantalite, one of the most precious items in our cargo of scarce war materials, and we swallowed hard at the thought that the bags might have slipped off into the water in the darkness.

Warrant Carpenter Don Malles got to work quickly with Navy aviation repair personnel at Port-of-Spain, and by nightfall we had a wingtip float as good as new. The next morning we set off on the 1,500-mile overwater flight to Bermuda, second longest leg of the journey, and the Old Lady made it in a breeze.

AT Bermuda, 4,400 pounds of airmail, all there was on the island, was stowed aboard with our 23,000 pounds of such high-priority materials as tantalite, mica, and beryllium, and the next morning, December 8, the Old Lady squared away for home. It took her just forty-five seconds to pick that 27,400-pound load off the water. A few hours later the precious cargo was being unloaded at Patuxent River Naval Air Station.

We had covered 8,972 miles. We had been gone eight days, but actual flying time was fifty-five hours and thirty-one minutes, a few hours more than two days. Our average speed had been 161 miles per hour, far from maximum because of tests carried out during the flight and because of the necessity of conserving gas on the first nonstop leg. And we had hauled a total of 48,000 pounds of priority war material, well over the capacity of a regular freight car.

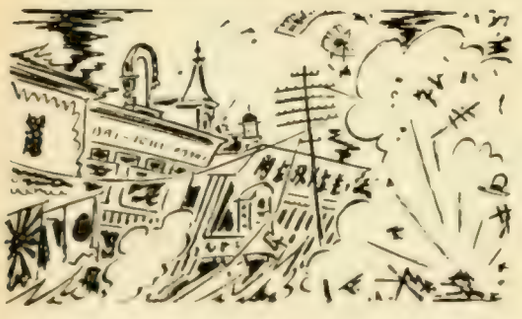
How did the Navy like the Old Lady's performance?

Well, on January 4 of this year it announced that it had ordered twenty more like her from the Glenn L. Martin Company. The new boats will join the Naval Air Transport Service squadrons which are flying critical cargo and key personnel over 70,000 miles of world airways.

And on January 22, not much more than a month after her epochal flight, the Old Lady herself entered the Navy's Pacific service to conquer new waters. With Skipper Bill Coney at the helm and Chief Bill Perry crawling in and out of the wings to inspect those engines, she flew twenty passengers and seven tons of mail and A-1-A war cargo from San Francisco to Hawaii.

Yes, sir, Mars has gone to war!

THE END



COLONEL STOOPNAGLE'S FICTIONARY

(Unabashed)

TOOKYO: A name for the Jap capital, after we've taken it.

WINDOUGH: The one at the race track that pays off.

WARLD: This globe at the present time.

ALPHABAT: The A B Cs of baseball.

BIGNORAMUS: A giant moron.

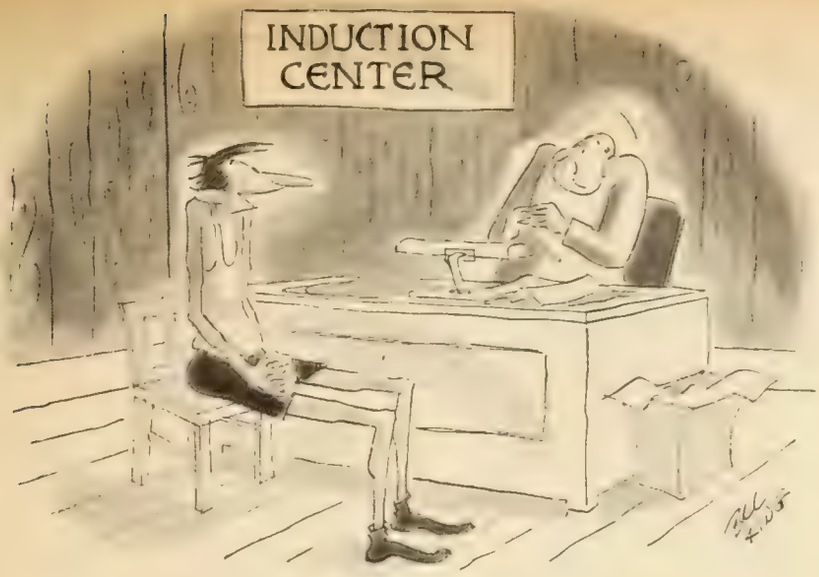
AWAYSIS: When water is far off, in the desert.

SLOWGAN: Motto for a snail.

DAMPSEY: The Manassa Mauler in the rain.

DO 'E? Dewey run or don't 'e?

WELLTHY: A rich oil baron.



"Sure I like girls. Do ya know any?"

NO MONEY IN MEDALS—Continued from Page 29

roof over her head, enough victuals for a while, and nothing else.

When she left me, with the lights out and my door shut, I couldn't sleep. I lay wondering about things most of the night. They weren't good thoughts. Even when I heard the Carmichaels come in and, maybe an hour later, go to their beds, I couldn't stop wondering. And what I was thinking about was the way we lived.

Uncle Hoke was right. There wasn't much hope in Sundown Valley of ever striking a fortune. And without money, what good was a man? He couldn't even hold his girl. It wasn't enough for a fellow to be faithful to a *ranch*—that was damn-foolish, come to think of it. You had to reach out for money—real money like Ducane had—if you hoped to amount to anything. Once you had it you could pretty much have your own way. I had a feeling Ellie would never have turned to Tod if she'd thought there was any chance of my ever having money. She knew I was a valley man and doomed, like her father. And in a way I couldn't blame her for not wanting any more of that kind of life.

But how could a man like me ever get money?

Once, just before the war, when I'd worked my way through that year at State College, I'd had some notions of doing big things with our land. But such ideas were dead now, after what the doctors had told me about my not being fit to work a ranch.

The only thing I could do now, for a spell, was go to the Coast for a job where I could sit all day, at Lockheed; but, even so, you didn't get rich at it. Some men, I figured, just had the knack of hitting big money. And some married it.

That was something—to marry big money. To marry into a family like, say, the Ducanes. You wouldn't have to worry after that. Not even if your house burned down. The guy who married Lila would be fixed for life, I thought.

And that was the way I fell asleep—considering the luck of the man who might some day marry Lila Ducane. Only, I didn't sleep long. I got up with a start, excited and wide-eyed, with the queer idea that—well, with Ellie marrying Tod Deever, what was to stop *me* from trying to be Lila's man?

Toward noon the next day, after he'd spent all morning at the ashes of his home, Dan Carmichael came upstairs and sat next to me, like a man who needed a friend. He'd aged about ten years overnight. The color of the ashes seemed to be in his face, and he sat with his bony hands dangling loose between his knees.

Ma was down in the kitchen, with Madge helping her fix dinner. You could smell the stew all through the house.

Dan and I were talking about the fire when I heard a car outside. It was the big red car that had passed me up on the road, and Will Ducane got out of it.

Ma let him come up to the room. He shook hands with me, asked how I felt, then turned to Dan, who hadn't budged in his chair. His face, with the droopy mustache, had got hard.

"Heard you were here, Carmichael," Ducane said.

Dan gave him a frown. He just waited.

Will Ducane sat down and lit a cigarette.

"Carmichael," he said, "we've had tough going, you and I. I came over hoping we could smoke a peace pipe."

"You putting a price on my land again?" Dan asked.

"Yes. Same price as before."

"Save yourself the trouble," Dan said.

"At twenty dollars an acre—when land around here never brought more than ten?"

"Even at fifty an acre!"

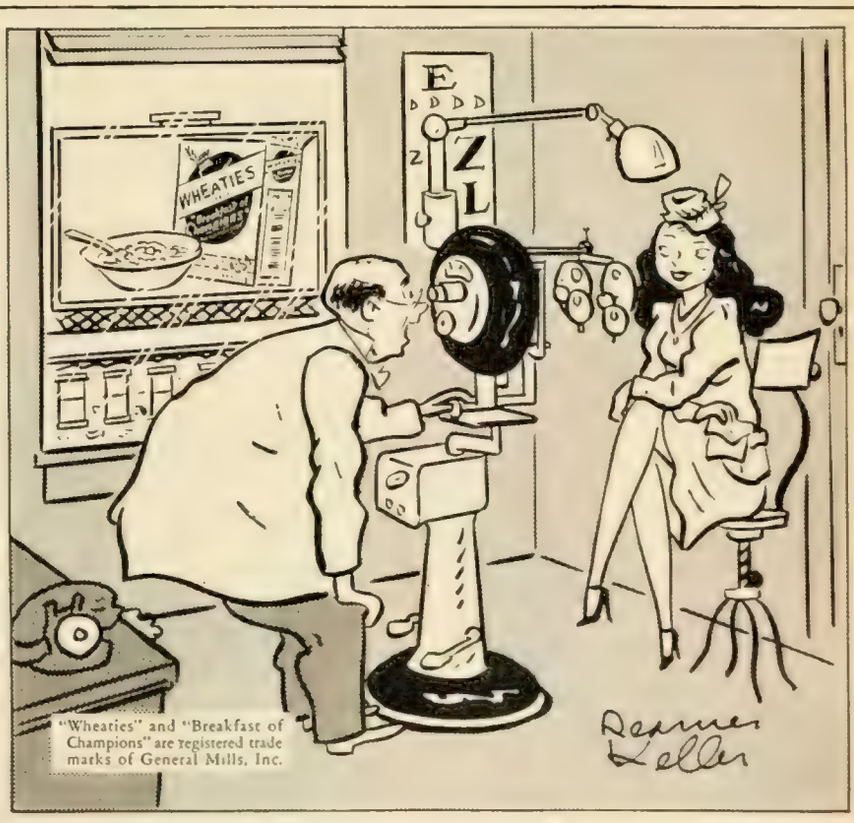
"With your twelve hundred and eighty acres you'd get over twenty-five thousand dollars. In cash. I'd pay cash in full—you know that."

"Uh-huh."

"You could buy yourself a very nice ranch with a quarter of that, and keep the rest as a reserve fund."

Dan drew in a long breath. He leaned back and crossed his lanky legs. "One thing you don't understand, Ducane, is that selling land for folks like us is like—like selling somebody out of your family. The land is *part* of us. It's something our grandfolks fought the Indians for and held and passed down to us, and we sort of feel like we're duty bound to pass it along in the family. You can't put a price on a feeling like that. Besides"—he gave Will Ducane a hard look—"I still can't figure why you *want* the whole valley."

Ducane smiled. "Maybe I've got plans for the valley which I don't want to dis-



"There's a peculiar gleam in your eyes when you roll them to the right, Miss Todd."

Now, Doctor, don't you recognize that Wheaties gleam? It's eager anticipation that brightens the countenances of so many hungry customers when they hear the call, "Wheaties on the table!" When you're all set to do justice to a "Breakfast of Champions," nothing can quite take its place.

cuss. A new soil-enrichment project, let's say, which would make it necessary for me to lay out the whole valley in scientific ways suggested by the Soil Conservation Commission."

Dan snorted.

"Or maybe"—Ducane smiled again—"maybe I'm an egoist. Perhaps I just want to feel, when I look off my porch, that I'm monarch of all I survey."

"Nice language," Dan said, "but I don't figure to sell."

"Planning to build a new house?"

"I got to live *some* place."

Will Ducane glanced at me. He asked, "How about you, Conley? I didn't want to take this up with you until you were well. You realize the same offer I made Carmichael holds good for you. Twenty dollars an acre—in cash."

I said, "It wouldn't do you much good to get my land without Dan's, would it?"

"No-o, I suppose not—"

"Then we can talk," I said, "if you ever get Dan to say yes."

They were acting like peaceable men, and that was good. I'd been afraid of a flare-up ever since Will Ducane had walked into the room. He couldn't have forgotten the fight he'd had with Carmichael; and it made me feel all the more that nothing—not even his pride—was as important to Ducane as buying the Carmichael spread. He was ready to take anything, you'd have thought, if only he could get those twelve hundred and eighty Carmichael acres signed over to himself.

But he didn't get far this morning. By the time he was ready to go, he hadn't swayed Dan at all. Still, he left himself an opening to try again.

"Think it over," he said to Dan. "Twenty-five thousand dollars can buy you a lot more land elsewhere than you ever had here. I'll bet even your grandfather would have grabbed at a deal like that. I'll talk to you again before you start building."

Dan Carmichael rose when Ducane had reached the door. "By the way," he said, and his deep voice shook, "I'm thankful to you for sending your men yesterday to help with the fire."

"That's all right. You'd have done the same for me, I'm sure."

Dan's eyes got narrow. "I'm still trying to figure how it started."

Ducane shrugged his shoulders. "I guess that's one of the things you'll never find out now, Carmichael. You may as well quit worrying about it."

BY mid-afternoon I was sick of lying in bed. Though I still felt shaky, I found I could get up on my feet and pull on my uniform. Then I had to rest awhile.

At last I yelled for ma, who'd been up to see me every hour or so; and though she cried out, "Land sakes!" when she found me sitting there, dressed, and she tried to make me lie down again, I argued her into seeing that I'd be just as well off sitting on the porch. And she helped me down. Afterwards she brought me my pipe and Lila's radio.

It was good to sit in a rocker and light the pipe and just soak in the sun. I shut my eyes, smiling, and I didn't look up till I heard a sound.

It was a black car—the old sedan Matt Wilson over in Twin Buttes rented out as a taxi, with himself driving. Ellie got out of it, holding some packages. I figured she'd had to buy some clothes if all hers had been burned. Matt drove away and she came up the porch steps staring at me in surprise.

"Jeff!" she said. "Isn't it too soon to be out of bed?"

"No, I'm all right."

It was funny how cheerful I sounded. There was no heartache now. Looking at Ellie didn't bother me at all this afternoon.

She sat on the edge of a chair, looking at me with worried eyes. "You're awful pale, Jeff."

"It'll pass."

She glanced down at the radio. It was playing soft music. The way her lips tightened I knew she didn't like that thing playing next to me; maybe she just didn't like the idea that it had come to me from a Ducane.

I looked away from her. While I smoked and stared across the sunlit valley, I could see a long streamer of brown dust on the road, and soon I made out a yellow car. I knew that car. I wondered if it was heading for town or for our place.

Ma stepped out of the door. She had on an old gray dress and an apron, and she was tucking back her hair. When she saw Ellie and me together, she stopped as if she was sorry she'd come just then.

She said, "Your ma and pa went back to the place, Ellie."

"Poking around the ashes—" Ellie said with a sigh. "What good will it do?"

Ma answered in a gentle way, "They got a heap of memories buried in those ashes, Ellie."

Then she went down the porch steps. I watched her draw a bucket of water from the well and go on into the barn, with her chickens following. After a while she came out with Uncle Hoke. He was shaking water out of his beard.

"Gosha'mighty, Amy," he said, "you don't have to get my shirt all wet like this! Ain't you ever gonna learn to douse my head?"

"You shut up and get me some firewood!" ma said.

She went back into the kitchen while Uncle Hoke, growling and grumping, walked off to the woodpile. I looked out toward the road again. Lila's yellow car was close now.

Ellie saw it, too. She got up, standing stiff. It seemed to me her face was strained as she watched.

"You—you've become mighty friendly with the Ducanes all of a sudden, haven't you?" she said.

"Seems like."

"What is it?" Ellie asked with the kind of sting in her voice I'd never heard before. "The medals?"

"Might be. Or else they're just trying to be friendly. What's the difference?"

Ellie said, "I—I'll go help your ma. She'll be fixing supper."

So she went in, and the door banged hard behind her. I knew she felt hurt by the way I'd talked, yet I didn't care. It's queer how sometimes you *want* to hurt somebody you love. I didn't mind it a bit when Ellie went inside; I didn't even look around after her.

LILA waved her arm as she jumped out of the car. "Good for you!" she called. "Didn't think you'd be strong enough to come down for days!"

She looked very nice in slacks and a loose tan blouse, with a band around her hair. I remembered the thoughts I'd had last night—about how lucky a man would be to marry her, with all that money—and though the thoughts seemed sort of foolish now, in daylight, I looked at Lila Ducane in a new way.

She sat on the porch rail, hooking her feet in the bars under it, and she took a pack of cigarettes out of a pocket. Sitting like that, smoking with me, she seemed like an old friend. She let her eyes run over me.

"You know, Jeff," she said, "you're not a bad-looking guy as wounded men go."

"You should have seen me when I was a baby," I said.

Go on, Jeff, I said to myself. You know what you're doing? You're kidding around with a few million dollars. But that's all right. That's the only thing that counts—getting your hands onto plenty of money. Quit being a dope. Reach for what you can. If you don't, people will kick you around the rest of your days—the way Ellie kicked you.

Lila laughed at me. "I'll bet you could be fun."

"Try me when I'm healthy."

"Oh, I intend to!" she said. "I have plans."

"You know what I'd like to do? I'd like to come over to your place one of these days and just sit in the sun and watch you run around that tennis court."

"You'd love it. I'm cute in shorts."

"I ought to feel up to it," I said, "by the day after tomorrow."

"Nothing could keep me away from your party."

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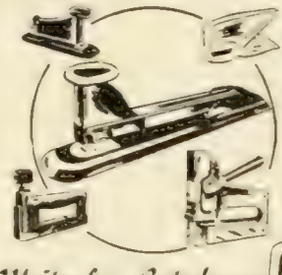

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"It's a date. I'll drive over and pick you up." She lifted one eyebrow. "Say, you wouldn't have a friend for Peggy, would you?"

"Sure. In Australia."

"That helps. Well, she can have Mr. Murgridge."

"*Who?*"

"Walter Murgridge. He's a scientist of some sort dad's got visiting us. A metallurgist. A little on the stuffy side, but Peggy will soften him up."

For an hour or so we talked about a lot of things—about the fire and the way the Carmichaels felt, till at last I looked hard at Lila and asked:

"What's your father got in his head, anyhow? What does he want with all this land?"

"Mister," Lila said, "I've been trying to guess what dad's got in his mind for seventeen years, nine months, and two weeks—that being my life span to date. And I've never got at anything yet that he didn't want me to know." She smiled in a queer way. "He's quite a man, my dad. If he wants this land—well, I'd be willing to lay a small bet he gets it."

"Not from Dan Carmichael he won't."

"You don't know my dad."

She looked around at the sun. It was red and low over the badlands, and it made the whole valley beautiful. This was the way I loved it, with every color you could think of smeared over the rocks in the hills, and the faraway mountains stark and black against the light, and the shortgrass painted purple and brown. I looked back at Lila. She was beautiful, too.

She said she'd have to start back. As she got off the porch rail, smiling at me and fixing the band around her hair, I told myself, Go on, Jeff. There's nothing to hold you to Ellie any more. You got to think about yourself now. Try it.

"Well, Ed will more than likely be late for chow."

And I said, grinning, "You know what I'd do, Lila, if I had the strength to get up and act like a man? I'd thank you for being so nice to me—with a kiss."

She said, "I don't see why I should be penalized just because some Japs shot at you."

And before I could move she bent over in a way so easy and natural you'd think it happened every day, and kissed me right on the lips. Quick and soft and without fuss. Then she put her fingers into my hair and gave my head a shake.

"See you tomorrow, soldier," she said with a smile.

I still felt funny inside about it when suppertime came. Though ma thought I ought to go back to bed, I showed her how a half hour one way or the other wouldn't make any difference; and so I sat at the table with her and the Carmichaels and Uncle Hoke.

UNCLE HOKE tried to keep the supper talk going, but it wasn't much use. You couldn't expect the Carmichaels to be cheerful. Dan didn't even give much attention to Ellie when she surprised everybody by saying to ma:

"You won't feel too bad, will you, if I go over and stay with Grace Folsom in town?"

I stared at Ellie. So did ma and Madge Carmichael. Ellie's face was white and there were new shadows under her eyes. I hadn't noticed them before because I hadn't let myself look straight at her. But now I saw them, and they put a quick clamp on my heart. It came to me that maybe it was harder for Ellie to live here, near me, than I'd stopped to realize.

Ma said, "You don't have to do that. We got plenty of room. You ain't putting anybody out."

"It's not that. I—I saw Grace today, and she—well, she just made me *promise*."

Ma looked disappointed. "Well, of course, if you'd rather—"

"I'm meeting Tod tonight," Ellie said, the words rushing along. "He's driving over for me. He—he can drop me at Grace's later. I'm just hoping you won't feel bad about it. I mean—you've been so nice—"

"You do what makes you feel best," ma said. Then she went back to the stove.

Ellie and everybody else looked down at their plates again, as if we were saying grace. It was mighty embarrassing somehow. But I caught Uncle Hoke's eye, and he gave me a wink with the face of an owl.

After that, though we didn't talk to each other, I kept watching Ellie. The lamplight shone through her red-gold hair the way I'd always liked it. My heart got to banging. I didn't know how I felt, good or bad. All of a sudden I didn't want her to go away. And I didn't know what to say about it.

I was thinking about Ellie and me, and how fine things had always been between us. The thoughts went far, far

(*Continued on page 58*)

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⁂

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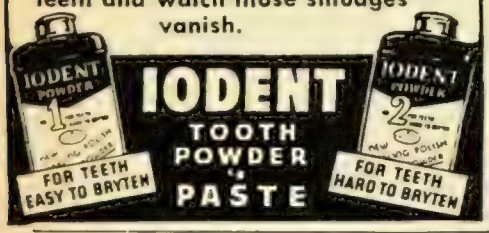

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(*Continued from page 56*)

back. After a while they kind of choked me. I remembered even the time, years ago, when we'd made believe we got married. I guess I was thirteen or fourteen then, and Ellie about twelve. We'd gone scrambling up into the badlands after lizards—I used to be a great one for keeping them in bottles. And we'd found isinglass or something shiny like that in rocks. I'd dug out a piece of it with my knife, and later I'd made a ring with a couple of small nails twisted together, with the isinglass jammed between them like a diamond. Then I'd put the ring on her finger and told her it made her mine for keeps. Of course she'd lost it a week or two later, but it was strange how I remembered it now.

And I thought maybe ma had been right. Maybe I *could* get Ellie back from Tod Deever. The way she was acting, I was sure she still had a soft spot for me.

But then I thought no, it's no use, she's going to marry Tod. What's the sense of trying to get her back? She'll never be happy remembering how she could have had Tod.

I WOKE up blinking, because Dan and Uncle Hoke were talking about the fire again. Dan was saying:

"Try to remember, Hoke. You drove over to our place about sundown to bring back Madge's berry wine for the company. That was maybe a half hour before we spotted the fire. Didn't you see *anybody* around the house?"

"Nary a soul," Uncle Hoke said.

Madge said, "But you'd been drinking a bit, Hoke. Maybe you just don't recollect—"

"I'd remember if I'd seen any of Ducane's men around," Uncle Hoke said. "There was nobody."

So Dan Carmichael sighed and went on eating.

When supper was over, Ellie went upstairs without so much as a glance at me this time—her face still white and strained. I got to wondering if maybe she'd looked out of a porch window when Lila had kissed me. Was that what bothered her now?

Still, I wasn't worried about it. It just puzzled me. I sat at the table, smoking a cigarette, while Uncle Hoke went all around the place hunting for his good pipe.

"You were smoking it yesterday," ma said. "Like as not you left it in your Sunday pants."

"Yeah, guess that's so." So Uncle Hoke went upstairs to see if the pipe was in his pants. He was gone quite a spell. And then we heard him let out a yell. It was a wild yell, and hoarse. Dan and I started for the stairs, but Uncle Hoke came running down, his heels banging hard. The minute I saw his face, with the eyes wide and scared, I knew there was trouble.

Next week Uncle Hoke solves a mystery, and Jeff is on the trail of another while he and Lila picnic in the badlands.

★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★

One day when Boswell was dining with Samuel Johnson, he asked his great idol if he did not think that a good cook was more essential to the community than a good poet.

"I don't suppose," replied the irascible doctor, "that there is a dog in town but what thinks so."

★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★

NIGHT OF MARCH 15

Continued from Page 17

give me hell if she finds I do this on the floor. But I guess I do not do a very good job of acting, for the agents are not convinced.

"It does seem incredible,' Glasses says. "But we can check with the people Mr. Mimble claims he paid expenses to. Suppose you come with us, Mr. Mimble, and we will try and find Mr. Welcome Tortoni."

Well, of course, I figure it is only polite for me to go with the agents, Mr. Keek, though I am sorry to see them take the trouble to go on such a trip, for I am sure there is no such a person as Mr. Welcome Tortoni. And also I am very happy to think there is no such person either.

I ask where they think they will find Mr. Welcome Tortoni. Glasses acts like he is a little surprised, and says naturally they will look for him first at the address I give in my return. And I say naturally. And will you believe me, Mr. Keek, when we reach this place, a wop with the toughest and meanest face I ever see comes to the door, and he says yes, he is Mr. Welcome Tortoni.

Believe me, I am sick, for I figure he is not going to like it for a stranger like me to say I pay him ten thousand dollars for any reason whatsoever. And I am right, Mr. Keek, for when Glasses explains how things are, and asks do I pay this money for a lay-away after I kill Piggy Rocca, Mr. Tortoni gives me a blowtorch look.

"That little shrimp, copper?" he says. "I never saw him before in my life, copper," he says. "And he better not let me see him again, if he likes his health, copper. He can't frame me and get away with it."

"What did I tell you?" the muscle agent asks Glasses. And both gave me dirty looks. And I figure I am just as good as in jail already if Mr. Welcome Tortoni lets me live long enough to get there.

"I AM sorry to trouble you further, Mr. Tortoni," Glasses says doubtful-like, "but we have to check the place where Mr. Mimble says you hid him. Maybe you would like to go along?"

"Where?" Mr. Tortoni asks suspiciously.

Glasses looks at my return.

"Over on Twelfth Street, near the river," he says.

"Huh?" Mr. Tortoni asks. And he swallows a couple of times. Then he does a most surprising thing, Mr. Keek. He holds out his hand to me. "Excuse me for not recognizing you at first, buddy," he says. "Sure I remember you paying me ten grand for a hide-out, now you mention the place."

"He did, eh?" Glasses says sharply. "You know what that means, Mr. Tortoni. I checked, but couldn't find you filed any tax return last year. You had better drop by the office tomorrow and straighten things out."

Mr. Welcome Tortoni gives out with a sick kitten grin.

"Anything you say, gentlemen," he says. "And now, if you will excuse me, I got some business I must tend to right away, if you want me to pay my taxes when I come."

Well, Mr. Keek, those agents are very much puzzled at Mr. Welcome Tortoni acting like he does. And they wonder if he will drop by in the morning and settle up. But they are not nearly so puzzled as I am, Mr. Keek, for I do not

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really pay Mr. Welcome Tortoni any money, and the only thing I can think is he is nuts. Or maybe I am.

And I might tell you now, Mr. Keek, that Mr. Welcome Tortoni does drop by the next day and settles up. And I hear later he makes his living kidnaping people into this place of his on Twelfth Street, and he has a paying guest there at this time, and Mr. Tortoni is afraid if the agents go poking around they might find the guest and not understand. And I hear also that before this guest can check out he has to kick in five grand extra for Mr. Tortoni's taxes. But this may just be a rumor.

"Something is fishy," the muscle agent says after Mr. Tortoni leaves. "Let's see what Cement Joe says about you paying him ten G to give Piggy Rocca a concrete bath and a swim."

As you may well believe, Mr. Keek, when we find Cement Joe, he says plenty. And in between his profanity he says he never sees me before, which is true, and he never hears of Piggy Rocca, and he never puts any one in a barrel of concrete, let alone a stranger. But when Glasses suggests we all go over to the river right where my return says the barrel is dumped, and see can we find it, Cement Joe says maybe I pay him this money after all, and he is most willing to pay his taxes if that will clear things up, and there is no need going to all this bother.

But Glasses thanks Cement Joe, and says it is no trouble at all, and we will pick up a diver on our way over. The diver goes down, and pretty soon he calls for a rope and tongs, and, sure enough, when we haul up we have caught us a barrel of concrete. And before we are through, we haul up five barrels, Mr. Keek, and Cement Joe is very angry when the last two are found. He walks up and down the bank and I hear him mutter about giving some one a poke in the puss for dumping barrels in the part of the river he uses.

NATURALLY the agents want to know right off which barrel is Piggy Rocca. But Cement Joe will not commit himself. All he will say is he does not know anything about anything, and besides, what difference does it make, for the chances are if they knock them barrels of concrete apart, one guy will do as well as another for Piggy Rocca. Also, Cement Joe is very apologetic and he promises to pay his taxes at once if that will prevent any publicity. And he explains he does not want any publicity because, for all he knows, it may be against the law to dump barrels in the river without a license.

What I tell you so far is just a sample. For the next two weeks Muscle and Glasses drag me around while we call on the killers and fences and yeggs and other tough citizens named in my return. And will you believe me, Mr. Keek, for one reason or another, all these persons are most willing to pay taxes on what I am supposed to have given them, if that will square matters and make the government take its nose out of their affairs.

Of course, Mr. Keek, before all these new taxpayers can step up to the pay window, they need a lot of extra money and all at once, so there is a big wave of hold-ups and robberies and just crimes in general like this town does not ever see before. The newspapers and the police and the mayor are very indignant, and they blame the crimes on the war and on social conditions and on each other. But they do not blame things on the real cause, Mr. Keek, which is my income-tax return, as you can see.

Now all of this is most embarrassing to me, and even when the agents apologize, and the one with muscle says he never so misjudges a man in his life, I do not feel any too good. For now I do not know whether I want my tax return believed or not, on account of most of these tough persons I mention are resentful and blame me personally for Glasses making them pay taxes on money they do not ever receive. And sometimes when I think how Mr. Welcome Tortoni looks at me, or how Cement Joe cracks there is room at the bottom of the river for plenty more barrels, I think what a nice safe place a jail is.

ONE day Glasses calls and asks will I come down to his office. When I get there I think maybe I am in the welcome room of Sing Sing, for I see a lot of these new taxpayers, like Dreamy Sam Sleeper and Murder Mac and Manny Brushoff and five members from the Orange gang way uptown.

And while I am waiting, there is a rumpus, for it seems Manny Brushoff is in such a hurry to come he forgets to bring money for his taxes. So he apologizes to Glasses and walks outside the railing, where he drops some cigarette ashes on an old geezer with chin whiskers and spats, who is there to pay off for a dozen corporations he owns. Naturally Manny helps brush off the ashes, and happens to brush the wallet out of this geezer's pocket.

But I guess Manny is in too much of a hurry, for this citizen notices what is happening. He raises a fearful row, and Manny has to explain how he is just trying to be patriotic and pay his taxes. But this citizen is not in a patriotic mood at all, and I guess he would still be squawking about the government not protecting its taxpayers, if Manny does not threaten to give him a push in the mush if he does not close it.

Glasses gives me the welcome hand, and he says he has finished the final audit of my income-tax return and he is now convinced everything I say is true, and he wants to apologize again for ever doubting me when I say I kill Piggy Rocca.

"This ought to be a lesson to you," I say severely.

"It is a lesson, Mr. Mimble," Glasses answers. "You deserve a badge for honesty. Besides making a lot of hoodlums pay their taxes, you have been instrumental in calling off the hunt for Piggy Rocca. That has saved the government I don't know how much. However, there is one thing that is a little embarrassing. It has been decided to disallow all your claims for business expenses."

It takes me a minute to get what this means.

"Huh?" I gasp.

"Yes, Mr. Mimble," Glasses continues in that cold voice of his. "Your business expenses have not been allowed, so I must ask you to make arrangements to pay an income tax on the fifty thousand dollars you received for killing Piggy Rocca."

Mr. Keek, I guess I do not need to tell you how I felt. It is like being in an elevator when the cable busts.

"Hey!" I yelp. "Hey! You can't do that to me! I never killed any one. And I never even see fifty thousand dollars in my life, let alone earn it."

"You swore you did," Glasses says. "And your word is good enough for the Bureau. We would appreciate your pay-

(*Continued on page 62*)

Third down···and ONE to go!

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(Continued from page 60)

ing your taxes at once, Mr. Mimble, for being in your business, your life expectancy is not so great. And now, if you will pardon me, I am very busy."

Mr. Keek, when I walk out of there I am low. The best I can see I will be working the next ten years for the government, either on the outside paying taxes, or on the inside breaking rocks. I think hard and I figure my only chance of getting out of this jam is to find this joker who makes out my return on March 15, and see can I get him to straighten things out.

I must look for him in most every bar in town, Mr. Keek. And when I enter, the barkeeps and waiters don't just not see me as in the past, but jump right to wait on me, and I hear whispers go round: "There is the guy that croaks Piggy Rocca." Though it is not published in the papers who does the killing, already the story is around, and I am a notorious character. And I do not mind confessing, if I am not in such a fix I would like being notorious.

About the last place I go is Boston's. And would you believe it, Mr. Keek, I see this joker I am looking for, sitting at the same table we occupy the night of March 15. I duck out and phone Glasses, for if I can get this joker to explain how it is all a gag, I want Glasses around close to hear.

Then I amble over to this big lug's table and sit down. I shove him a smile like we are old friends, but he just scowls and gives me the old fish eye.

"Remember me?" I ask.

"I never saw you before in my life, chum," he says. "And I never forget a face. Especially a funny face."

Then he guffaws loud and mean.

"Don't you remember helping me with my income-tax return?" I ask.

His face gets ugly. And I get scared.

"I never saw you before," he snaps. "And I am tired of seeing you now, chum. So you better beat it."

When he says this, Mr. Keek, I begin to weep. All I can think of is jail is not going to be so pleasant. I sit there with the tears rolling down my cheeks and splashing on the table, when some one slaps me on the back and asks:

"Why, Mr. Mimble, what is wrong?"

It is Glasses, Mr. Keek.

This joker looks at Glasses and says, "Your friend here has a crying jag on. And if you want him to stay in good health, you better take him somewhere else to weep. If I want tears in my drink I will put them there myself."

Glasses stares at him.

"I know you," Glasses says all of a sudden. And before this joker can move, Glasses is all over him and snaps handcuffs on his wrists. "I know you," Glasses repeats. "You are Piggy Rocca."

"You can't do this to me!" this joker yelps. "I'm dead. You can't arrest me."

"If you're dead, you shouldn't mind a little thing like getting arrested," Glasses says. "I must say this for you, Piggy. You pulled a very clever trick, making us think you were dead so we'd call off the bloodhounds."

WELL, Mr. Keek, when Glasses calls Piggy clever, he just naturally swells up fit to pop and he gets a conceited smile on his face like a Christmas pig with a red apple in its mouth. And he gestures as much as he can with handcuffs on.

"Oh, that is nothing," he says. "Nothing a tall," he says. "I just see a chance to make you turn off the heat, and I take it. And I get even with a lot of wiseheimers who do me dirt in the past, too." He starts to laugh at this last till he shakes the room. "I would sure like to have seen Welcome Tortoni paying taxes on ten grand he never got!" he roars. "And Cement Joe too!"

"I understand everything now, Mr. Mimble," Glasses says to me. "You ought to pick up a nice hunk of change for helping to capture Piggy. There is still a big reward for his capture.

"Yes, sir," Glasses says. "You ought to get just about enough reward to take care of all that income tax you owe."

"Hey!" I yelp. "Nix. You can't charge me income tax for killing Piggy Rocca. He's standing right there."

"You swore you got paid to kill him, Mr. Mimble," Glasses answers in that icebox voice of his. "And that is good enough for us." He turns to Piggy Rocca. "Come on, Piggy," he says. "I want to get you lodged safely in jail."

And that is how things stand, Mr. Keek. And what I want to know is, do you think it is right for the government to take away my reward for capturing Piggy Rocca and apply it on taxes I am supposed to pay for killing him? I ask you, Mr. Keek, isn't there a law or something?

THE END

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THE GAY NINETIES SOUND A NOTE . . . FOR REAL ENJOYMENT TODAY

Stirring Sousa marches and the delicate nuances of Richard Strauss vied for favor in the Gay Nineties. Famed for robust entertainment, good hosts also complimented the taste of guests with whiskey as light as their meals were rich and hearty. Kinsey whiskey was produced especially for this purpose. Today it comes to you with the same enjoyable smoothness, for the original distiller, Mr. J. G. Kinsey, still personally supervises the blending. Kinsey Distilling Corporation, Linfield, Pennsylvania.

"Enjoy this Distinguished Whiskey, Sir"...Now as in 1892

86.8 Proof
65% Grain Neutral Spirits

KINSEY BLENDED WHISKEY

HASTEN VICTORY . . . BUY MORE WAR BONDS

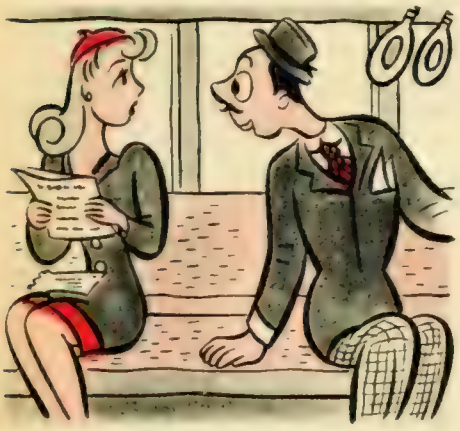
THIS MAN'S WAR

CONDUCTED BY OLD SARGE

I'M used to getting letters from most anywhere. This week the mailbag has one from Eastern State Penitentiary, in Philadelphia, containing a song on the subject of letter writing.

The writer, J. McG., says: "Regardless of comparisons between servicemen and men such as I am, we have one thing in common, and that's loneliness. Maybe this lyric will give the necessary prod to some of your readers to drop a line to some boy in the service."

O. K., here is the lyric—and let's hope it prods out a lot of letters:



A letter a day

There's a lonesome boy tonight,
Just because you failed to write;
Now he's out there feeling sad and blue,
Waiting just to hear from you.

There's a lonesome boy somewhere,
With a tear, and with a prayer;
He just longs to hear that you're O. K.,
Now that he has gone away.

Sit right down and drop a line,
Tell him that you're feeling fine.
Every letter fills his heart with joy,
And there's one less lonesome boy.

Several months ago this department printed a poem, A Letter from You, by Private Robert A. Schultz. Now he's itching to write some more poetry.

"I was completely surprised and overwhelmed when my mother sent me the copy of Liberty with my poem in it," he writes. "I was a patient in the hospital at Camp Upton when I sent it in. I am now an instructor in the Special Service Forces and enjoy the Army very much.

"I am willing to write a poem for any man or woman in the armed forces or any civilian if it will help keep up the morale of our fighting men. I wrote several at Camp Upton, and also here at Camp Harahan, New Orleans, Louisiana."

Letter writing works both ways. You can't expect to be at the receiving end without doing a little sending. Captain M. G. writes from Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri

"It is just as important for servicemen to write home often to their wives and sweethearts as it is for them to receive letters. I would suggest a slogan to be memorized by every man in the service: A letter a day will keep the wolves away."

All I'd like to add is, there's no time like the present. How about dashing off a letter right now?

OLD SARGE.

* * *

I have been sworn into the Army Air Corps as a cadet and expect to be called soon. I want to be married before then, but will I still be allowed to go into my chosen branch as a flying cadet? *A. B., Louisville, Ky.*

There are no restrictions on Army aviation cadets getting married. It is permissible to marry while in training or before being called.

* * *

There's a continual argument here about the order of precedence in which decorations and service ribbons should be worn. Can you settle it, Sarge?

S/Sgt. A. S., Camp Crowder, Mo.

Here is the proper order of precedence, with the ribbons being worn in rows from the wearer's right to his left:

Distinguished Service Cross, Distinguished Service Medal, Legion of Merit, Silver Star, Distinguished Flying Cross, Soldier's Medal, Purple Heart, Air Medal, Gold Life-Saving Medal, Silver Life-Saving Medal, Good Conduct Medal, followed by service and campaign ribbons in the order of dates of service performed.

* * *

What pension is paid to the dependents of a soldier or sailor who is killed in line of duty?

Mrs. L. C. J., Abilene, Tex.

First of all, his next of kin receives from the Army or Navy, as the case may be, a cash sum equal to six months of his pay. Then the following monthly dependency pensions are paid: $50 a month for a wife, $15 additional for one child, and $13 for each additional child up to a limit of $100 a month for wife and children. If only children survive, $25 a month is paid for one child, $38 for two, equally divided, and $10 for each additional child.

In addition to pensions for wife and children, a dependent parent receives $45 a month, and if both parents are dependent they receive $25 a month each.

These pension payments are *in addition* to any benefits forthcoming from National Service Life Insurance.

* * *

What are the age, height, and weight requirements to qualify for Aerial Gunnery School?

Pfc. J. McD., Camp Pickett, Va.

Top age limit: 35. Height: maximum of 5 feet 10. Weight: maximum of 170 pounds.

* * *

I disagree with Private C. F. L., who thinks the movies are a fake. He wrote from "a South Pacific island" that he's seen dozens of girls in sarongs, but none of 'em look like Dorothy Lamour. Wonder if he has ever seen a Southern belle in a sarong? Sarge, tell him to send a sarong, and I'll send him a pin-up picture, even though he isn't a runner-up for Gary Cooper.

Dottie Dedmond, Charlotte, N. C.

I guess that letter speaks for itself. Except that Private C. F. L. was talking about belles from the South Pacific, not just the South. There's a difference.

* * *

In a recent issue you stated that the Americal Division got its name from American Guadalcanal Division, as a result of fighting alongside the Marines on Guadalcanal. As a former member of that outfit, I find you in error. The outfit was so named while in New Caledonia, "Americal" being a combination of America and Caledonia. However, you are right in stating that the Americal Division fought alongside the Marines on the Canal.

Cpl. A. P. N., Keesler Field, Miss.

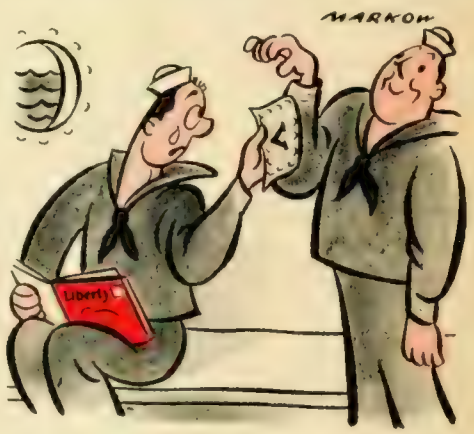
My apologies. I stand corrected. The division was formed on New Caledonia, chiefly from regiments of three other divisions. At this writing the Americal Division is a division in its own right.

* * *

I would like to enlist in the WAC, but I haven't the necessary two years of high school or business school—just eight years of working experience. Is there any way I could be accepted?

Miss I. J., Brooklyn, N. Y.

Go to WAC recruiting headquarters and ask to be given the mental alertness test. If you receive a qualifying score on it, the educational requirements may be waived.



Heartbreaking

I've got five buckeroos on this one, Sarge. Is there such a thing as an enlisted man in the Navy wearing an Army uniform? I say *no!*

J. B., Y3/c,
U. S. Naval Station, Norfolk, Va.

This breaks my heart, but you lose the fin. Enlisted men in the Navy who are serving with Army detachments are authorized to wear Army uniforms. They wear their own Navy insignia on the Army garb.

This department of Liberty is for the men and women of the armed forces of the United States: Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard, also their families and friends. The identity of letter writers will not be disclosed without their permission. Address your letters to: "Old Sarge," c/o Liberty, 205 East 42d St., New York 17, N. Y.

THE FELLOWS IN THE FOXHOLES

Continued from Page 30

During one of the first shows, somebody called for the final speech of Lou Gehrig in Pride of the Yankees. That, too, was a link with home, bringing back the feel of the ball park and the memory of a hero of American boyhood in a day that is gone. After that we made it a permanent part of the act.

I know my limitations as an entertainer. It's one thing to face a motion-picture camera on a studio sound stage, under the sympathetic eye of a good director. But to get up before a living audience and just start entertaining—well, the prospect had me scared stiff before I started.

BUT I found you don't need a polished or elaborate act. You don't even have to be good. All you have to do is be there; they'll do the rest. They want to see you and talk with you, because you're a link with home. Particularly, they want to see some more "glamour girls," American girls whose names and faces they know. Their presence will do more than anything else to show them they're not forgotten out there in the back alleys of this war.

For the same reason, motion pictures are important to them. The link with home. The glimpse of America. The sound of American voices. But they do *not* want propaganda pictures. Those American soldiers don't need to be told what they're fighting for, or why, or that they're doing a good job. They know all those things—better than the rest of us. They like comedies, musicals, dramas, war pictures, anything that's *good*—and they still know good pictures from bad. They want entertainment and—I can't say it too often—*the link with home.*

Yet, in spite of homesickness, the morale among our troops is wonderful. And right now is a good time to clear up any doubts that may exist about the conduct of such entertainment tours. Our time was never monopolized by officers. On the contrary, the officers did everything to facilitate our contact with the enlisted men.

There are no heels in the foxholes.

We covered the Allied-occupied section of New Guinea pretty thoroughly, including the forward area around Lae (a couple of times we had to duck into foxholes ourselves, although we were never in any real danger from the bombs). We made a few of the islands off the New Guinea coast; hit Christmas Island, the Fijis, parts of Australia, and some of the territory which is the setting for the picture The Story of Dr. Wassell. We put on from two to four shows a day, including hospital appearances. The trip lasted almost eight weeks, and Phyllis has it figured out that we covered about 30,000 miles, most of it by air. But for the benefit of those players who may go out there later, it must be said that the air trip across the Pacific seemed a relatively short and comfortable one; that everything was done to make things easy for us, and that, anyway, any slight discomfort we may have experienced seems an inconsiderable item in the log of so rich and memorable a journey.

We came back with our pockets full of telephone numbers, addresses, messages to pass on. One air squadron entrusted us with a model P-38, made of fragments of Jap shell casings, for President Roosevelt. And on the grave of that good, kind old trouper, May Robson, there are some fresh flowers from one of her soldier relatives on New Guinea.

JUST one more story. I know of a woman whose Navy son was at Pearl Harbor at the time of the Jap attack. It wasn't until almost three weeks later that she got word he was all right. Since then he and his ship have been in many of the major engagements in the Pacific war, and always it's been weeks later when she has had word of him.

Now he's home on leave. The other morning, about three o'clock, the telephone woke her. She had a second of panic; then she remembered her boy was home, safe and sound. She picked up the phone. It was his voice. "I'm over in Pasadena, mom," he said. "Just wanted you to know I was all right, so you wouldn't worry." She'd been enjoying her first night's sound sleep in two years. And he was over in Pasadena and afraid that she would be worried!

Would he have thought of that before Pearl Harbor?

The story shows how our fighting men have learned to worry about the home folks. The moral is the same as that of the story that began this piece.

Write to the boys!

And I'll promise you one thing. Una, Phyllis. Andy and I are going back to those fellows in the foxholes.

THE END

THIS CIGARETTE RECOGNIZED

by medical authorities—

PROVED less irritating to nose and throat

HERE'S the proof—from clinical tests with men and women smokers. The findings by distinguished doctors—reported in an authoritative medical journal—show that:

WHEN SMOKERS CHANGED TO PHILIP MORRIS, EVERY CASE OF IRRITATION OF NOSE OR THROAT—DUE TO SMOKING—EITHER CLEARED UP COMPLETELY, OR DEFINITELY IMPROVED!

Woman-Talk

BY
MARGARET FISHBACK

HOT TIP: A sign in a restaurant window on the West Coast pleads: WAITRESS WANTED—GOOD WAGES—FREE MEALS — FREE BOBBY PINS! Nothing about tips. But what better tip could a girl ask than a package of bobby pins? Housewives in need of domestic help might take a tip from the restaurant sign and advertise (if they could back it up), "Houseworker needed. Good pay. Light work, Sundays off. Easy hours. A free pair of nylons goes with the job." If any one could sub-

stantiate such an ad, she'd doubtless be swamped by the nylon-hungry. . . . One of the editors of a famous women's magazine has found a maid who is willing to stay at home with the editor's invalid mother, on condition that her employer do the heavy cleaning and dishwashing, while ye editor's husband does the marketing and cooking. Believe it or not, the arrangement is working nicely. Husband (an architect and not very busy) finds that he likes to cook. And the "maid" doesn't mind dusting.

LADIES OF PRINCIPLE: Although he would disagree with their views on liquor, even the most intemperate tippler must bow from the hips to the members of the W. C. T. U. for their many contributions toward the winning of the war. Mrs. Mabel S. Reed of 2142 University Avenue, Morgantown, West Virginia, has made six afghans for the Red Cross, and states that the National W. C. T. U., through its smaller units, has paid for six ambulances at $1,300 each, one at $2,000, a mobile unit canteen costing $1,865, and four blood-bank units costing from $500 to $2,600 each.

The Puerto Rico W. C. T. U. has sent 1,000 bags of candy to servicemen in hospitals. Among the organization's many other benefactions is the Travelers Aid station maintained at Ellis Island, in New York harbor. Mrs. Caroline Moore is in charge. With her staff of assistants she has sent out more than 12,000 cards to the parents and families of wounded soldiers, informing them of their condition.

FAST WORKERS: A record was recently set in an all-woman British repair and rebuilding factory when the female of the species stripped down, repaired, and reassembled two blitzed three-ton trucks in six hours each.

RETAIL POESY: As spring approaches, retail ads get fancier and fancier. One New York City store warbles of its "Victorian half-hat, abloom with roses. Nostalgic with your spring suit, your fluffy-ruffle blouse." *Nostalgic* means *homesick*, according to the Oxford Dictionary; Noah Webster goes a step further and defines *nostalgia* as homesickness causing acute melancholia. Maybe that's what the half-hat is meant to do, but I doubt it. . . . Another New York shop peddles its basic dresses with the clarion headline: "Something simple so I can show off my garnets." I read on—"Foil dresses for a woman who gets about—unexampled chance to dramatize the clips Jim gave you on your anniversary—the opals that belonged to Aunt Mary—the pearls the children chipped in on for Christmas." As for me, I got no pearls for Christmas, I have no opal-bearing aunts, and when I showed my mate an $1,825 Tiffany clip ad, all I got was a promise that he would buy me a pair if I'd wear them in my nose.

MOTHER LOVE: Many pediatricians and psychiatrists are swinging back to the old-fashioned view that babies are better off if they get lots of mothering. Fledglings, it seems, have an instinctive need for more than bodily comfort and a well filled stomach. What the doctor now orders is a generous daily ration of good old mother love, which hasn't yet been put up in vitamin or capsule form. This comes as a distinct pleasure to those of us who might otherwise have felt we had to sneak a squeeze and bootleg an occasional sanitary kiss on the top of the conk. More and more doctors today are expressing

the conviction that from the moment the urchin arrives it needs the sense of security that comes only from a doting mother's affectionate care. So mothers who must forgo the privilege of caring for their babies, should try to hold onto the same nurse for at least a year or two, so that the tadpole will not be subjected to the emotional upheavals that come with being separated from a trusted friend. After all, it upsets an adult's sleep and digestion to lose a pal, so why wouldn't it confuse and distress an infant?

SMOTHER LOVE: It would be easy to go haywire on this mother-love business, however. Psychiatrists differentiate between mothering and smothering. Mom mustn't grab baby to her bosom every time he yaps, or she'll spoil him. Mother love seasoned with wholesome neglect is the best blend.

WE HANDLE HIROHITO GENTLY—WHY?

Continued from Page 15

Hirohito's safety. General Doolittle gave specific orders not to bomb the imperial palace during the raid on Tokyo. There has been a whole series of pronouncements from semiofficial spokesmen, such as Joseph C. Grew, our former ambassador to Tokyo, that preservation of the Mikado is necessary to lasting peace in the Orient.

This has not been contradicted by any official declaration, even after the publication of the bestial Jap conduct on Bataan and elsewhere. At Moscow the United States, England, and Russia gave a solemn promise to one another and the world that "most assuredly the three Allied powers will pursue the guilty to the uttermost ends of the earth and will deliver them to their accusers in order that justice may be done." This warning, of course, did not include Japan, since Russia was not at war with Japan. But even at the Cairo Conference among President Roosevelt, Prime Minister Churchill, and Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek, nothing was published about our plans for the near-sighted little man with the big teeth.

Chiang Kai-shek himself, in his 1944 New Year's Day message, carefully avoided any mention of Hirohito, although he called upon the Japanese people to revolt against their militarist leaders, overthrow the Tokyo government, and establish a regime which, Chiang said, the Allies will respect.

NOW all this forms a definite pattern designed to fit the realities of the situation inside Japan. Hirohito's position as emperor is immensely powerful because of the intensive emperor-worship which the militarists have long encouraged in Japanese schools. Apparently our present hope is to use this adulation of the emperor as a boomerang and retain him as a symbol of a program of industrious peace instead of treacherous conquest. If we succeed, it will save hundreds of thousands of lives and decades of time in gaining for Japan a respected position in international society.

One gesture in this direction was the publication in December, 1943, of our State Department records dealing with the situation in Japan at the time of Pearl Harbor. These documents contain a strong new indictment of the Japanese government, but they tend to absolve the emperor himself, who is described as "taking the unprecedented step of directing the government heads to avoid war with the United States." The statement is based on a report from Ambassador Grew, which he obtained from "an unnamed informant" in Tokyo on October 25, 1941.

Obviously, the State Department's purpose in revealing it at a time when Washington was well aware of the Bataan massacre was to establish the fact that General Tojo's cabinet dared to override the command of the emperor and carry out its own program for Japanese conquest. This is in line with our press and radio comment, which for months has seldom mentioned Hirohito as the villain of the Japanese piece, and has concentrated its anger against Tojo. Officially we seem to ignore the undeniable fact that General Tojo says nothing, orders nothing, and has no position except through the authority he holds in the name of his master, Hirohito. One word

No wonder there's a Kleenex shortage—
everyone wants Kleenex
because it saves as it serves!

Annie isn't Absent Any More!

—since her plant pals use KLEENEX to help keep colds from spreading. They use a tissue once—then destroy, germs and all!

(from a letter by J. M. S., York, Pa.)

MIGHTY IMPORTANT!—for authorities say ½ of all war—work time lost from illness is due to the common cold!

MOM'S HOME!

WHEN WILL SHE LEARN KLEENEX KEEPS LIPSTICK STAINS OFF TOWELS—SAVES LAUNDRY, SOAP, MANPOWER!

(from a letter by R. G. A., Elmhurst, L. I., N. Y.)

No Brush-Off!

I tuck KLEENEX around the neck of dark dresses to prevent those powder "rims". KLEENEX catches the powder that won't brush off—Keeps down cleaning bills!

(from a letter by A. L., Springfield, Ill.)

Only KLEENEX★ *has the Serv-a-Tissue Box that saves time, saves trouble, saves tissues!*

★T. M. Reg. U. S. Pat. Off.

WE COULD MAKE MORE KLEENEX IF

we made the tissues thinner or skimped on size. But regardless of what others do, we are determined to maintain KLEENEX QUALITY in every particular!

from the emperor can, theoretically, take away at any moment all of Tojo's rank, power, and titles, or even force him to commit "honorable suicide."

As a practical matter, that might not be feasible in the middle of a war, but the news that Hirohito did not invite Tojo—or any of the extreme militarists—to the last traditional New Year's reception is taken to indicate that the emperor may attempt some independent move toward ridding his country of its bloody masters, whenever the time is ripe, and emerging as our Asiatic Badoglio.

Gambling on this possibility is a perfectly legitimate political risk for our side, since in the long run it may save lives and time for us, and might bring about a much more stable peace. The political danger in trying to fasten personal responsibility on Hirohito through a public trial is really staggering. The only possible way he could be "tried" is by an Allied court whose jurisdiction would never be admitted by any Japanese. No court in Japan has any power whatsoever over any member of the imperial house, and the emperor is the one symbol that is respected and can compel obedience.

Removal of the emperor by any means—short of an "accidental" direct bomb hit on the palace—would reduce Japan to a yelping mob of ninety million savage tribesmen, the biggest problem ever faced by civilization. Obviously, the slaughter of the whole ninety million is physically impossible. Consideration must be given to the easiest method for controlling Japan at least during the decades following its utter defeat, and use of the emperor as a figurehead may be the only practicable method.

THIS may be possible through the peculiar Japanese conception of its imperial family. Diplomats, missionaries, and newspaper correspondents who understand Japan as well as any Westerners can, agree that the Japanese people regard the emperor as God revealed in human form. He is an exclusively Japanese god and is not, like the god of other religions, above and apart from the world. Their god is the emperor and there is no other god in Japan. On New Year's morning, in every Japanese school the portraits of the emperor and empress are brought from their sanctuary with all the reverence the Christian shows to consecrated bread and wine. The Japanese children worship these images as the incarnate symbol of an irresistible power—the Japanese Empire.

But, you may ask, doesn't every nation worship its own existence more or less openly and candidly?

The point is that no other nation in history has claimed so much territory, material and spiritual, as belonging to its empire as have the Japanese militarists. Nor has any other nation been so fanatical in establishing its claims. An American missionary, translating from a Japanese religious book issued about 1920, found this passage which was being taught to all Japanese pupils:

"Japan is the parent nation of the world. He who is hostile to this nation opposes the will of God! There is no other god in Japan save the reigning emperor. . . . The Imperial family of Japan is the parent not only of the Japanese race but of all the nations on earth. In the eyes of the Imperial family of all generations (dead, living, and yet unborn) all races are the same. The Imperial family is above all racial considerations. All human disputes therefore may be settled in accordance with its immaculate justice. The League of Nations can only attain its object by placing the Imperial family of Japan at its head, for, if it is to succeed, the League must have a strong punitive force of a superracial and supernational character, and this can only be found in the Imperial family of Japan. . . ."

And Count Yoshinori Futara had this to say:

"Respect for the Japanese Emperor as an august personage who ascends his throne by right of birth is quite inconsistent with the racial ideal of Japan. The Emperor who reigns over us eternally from time immemorial to the endless future must not be regarded as merely an august personage; he must be venerated as a superhuman existence."

IN plain words, Hirohito, with his dead ancestors and all his unborn descendants, is not human at all. He and they coexist eternally, without birth or death except in appearance. They are gods! And when the gods speak in Japan, the Japanese obey.

That brings up the question: Dare we try a god?

There is no serious question about our right to try Hirohito as a temporal ruler. Emperors have been tried before. Twenty-five years ago the German Kaiser, William II, was indicted by the Allied Council in Paris, and in the Treaty of Versailles the German nation solemnly accepted the right of the Allies to try him before a High International Court. The fact that the Allies did not bring William II to trial in 1919 does not alter the precedent establishing the *right* to try him. But the Kaiser was not regarded anywhere as a god and the precedent is meaningless when applied to the person of Hirohito.

The Japanese legend establishes the emperor as the present representative of a family which has ruled Japan in an unbroken line for 2,600 years. We, of course, do not believe that Hirohito is descended from the sun-goddess, Amaterasu Omikami. But the Japs do believe it, and they breathe with the greatest reverence the only names by which Hirohito is known inside Japan: the Tenno, the heaven-born, and O-Tenshi-Sama, son of heaven.

Throughout Japan Hirohito is accorded the same unanimous reverence by the Nipponese that would be given by a devout Christian brotherhood to a second incarnation of Christ. This veneration is intensified by the fact that every Japanese believes he is honoring himself in giving it, since the divinity of the Tenno expressly includes the divinity of all Japanese blood.

That is why no revolt can be expected in Japan before the complete defeat and re-education of the Japanese populace, unless the revolt is led by the emperor himself.

The extent to which this belief pervades the population makes the German claim of racial superiority seem ludicrous by comparison. Every Japanese is, in his own eyes, a god, as was each of his ancestors back to the heaven-descended sun-goddess herself. Failure to fight to the last drop of blood not only disgraces the person himself but taints each one of his line of ancestors with the stigma of deserting the godhead of the Nipponese race.

And this is important. A fundamental part of this ideology is that no emperor can commit a wrong. Those who act in his name, however, may fail and so delay the fulfillment of the prophecy that "all nations will be absorbed into the infinitely blissful peace of Japan."

THAT is why a trial of Hirohito as a war criminal would be futile. It would provoke an orgy of self-blame and elevate the Tenno idea to even greater heights. To the Japanese, Hirohito would appear simply a martyr for their own failures to further his mission. It would build up a unified resentment and determination for revenge.

What about the obliteration of the religion that supports the emperor's divinity? That isn't impossible. The Tenno myth can be forcibly obliterated, but only by the destruction of the whole system that supports it. That would mean the destruction of the entire imperial family. If there are no descendants of the sun-goddess left, the myth will fade out in a few generations.

But in the modern world such wholesale extinction seems out of character with the faith most civilized men have in the possibility of redemption. And, like a trial of Hirohito, it would accomplish less than a simple statement from the throne that the Japanese government had entirely misused the power given it by the emperor. The emperor could start with a clean slate on the road to rebuilding a peaceful modern nation. In that direction seems to lie the wisest policy of the Allies.

THE END

When youngsters abuse their stomachs, don't make matters worse by giving overdoses of antacids, or harsh physics!

Try giving gentle, soothing PEPTO-BISMOL, to help relieve stomach upsets caused by over-indulgence, change of diet, nervous, hasty eating, or bad combinations of food. It's pleasant to the taste! *At all drug stores.* If you do not get prompt relief, consult your physician.

Pepto-Bismol*

By the Makers of *Unguentine Norwich

FIGHTING STEEL

Continued from Page 23

75,000,000 pounds of aluminum were freed to be used in other parts of airplanes.

The fundamental reason for our ability to bring off this enormous expansion of the steel industry lies, of course, with our great national wealth of raw materials and the ingenuity of our people.

The vast open-pit mines of the Mesabi Range in Minnesota furnish about 70 per cent of the raw iron ore which the industry needs, and there are many other mines scattered over the country. The other materials needed to make steel are coal (processed into coke), limestone, and scrap iron and steel. We have plenty of those things in our country—though scrap did get a little tight until all of us pitched in and built up the reserve piles. The importance of possessing these raw materials within our own borders becomes plain when we learn that it takes four tons of them, cooked together, to make one ton of finished steel.

Our national steel plant was huge, too. Even before the war there were mills and factories in twenty-eight of the states. Yet this steelmaking capacity was not nearly big enough for the war job. Fortunately, the steel industry did not permit the depression to check its program of expansion and improvement. During the ten years which ended in 1940 the industry spent more than a billion dollars of its own reserve funds and money borrowed from stockholders for such purposes. Then, shortly before Pearl Harbor, the entire program of expansion was co-ordinated under the guidance of the War Production Board. Federal funds to the extent of another billion dollars were made available. And that is how we were able to build steel capacity up to 96,000,000 tons.

BUT it isn't quite the whole explanation. There had to be some brains, too—scientific and managerial brains. There had to be a great variety of skills and a lot of devotion to the job that lay ahead.

At the time of the first World War we really did not know a very great deal about complex alloyed steels. We could make the kinds of steel we needed for peacetime purposes. We had pioneered in structural steel for big buildings and in easily stamped steel for cars and household appliances. But when it came to steels for the special uses of war, we had to send missions to England and France to acquire their know-how.

Then the armistice threw some of the new steels on the civilian market, and our automobiles and trains and planes became bigger and better. Our plants went back to the old familiar stuff too, and the new knowledge we had gained gave impetus to both "pure" and practical research.

Five years ago, as the war in Europe began to simmer to a boil, a number of foresighted men in the steel industry began to sense what lay ahead. All of the big companies increased their research laboratories, and staffed them with men learned enough and curious enough to explore many of the unused or unrecognized possibilities of steel. And what is the consequence?

The 1917 situation is reversed today. The British and the Russians have sent numerous missions over here to

(Continued on page 72)

What happens when your hat comes down?

SOMEDAY, a group of grim-faced men will walk stiffly into a room, sit down at a table, sign a piece of paper—and the War will be over.

That'll be quite a day. It doesn't take much imagination to picture the way the hats will be tossed into the air all over America on *that* day.

But what about the day after?

What happens when the tumult and the shouting have died, and all of us turn back to the job of actually making this country the wonderful place we've dreamed it would be "after the War"?

No man knows just what's going to happen then. But we know one thing that must *not* happen:

We must *not* have a postwar America fumbling to restore an out-of-gear economy, staggering under a burden of idle factories and idle men, wracked with internal dissension and stricken with poverty and want.

We must *not* have breadlines and vacant farms and jobless men in Army coats tramping city streets.

That is why we must buy War Bonds—now.

For every time you buy a Bond, you not only help finance the War. You help to build up a vast reserve of postwar buying power. Buying power that can mean millions of postwar jobs making billions of dollars' worth of postwar goods and a healthy, prosperous, strong America in which there'll be a richer, happier living for every one of us.

To protect your Country, your family, and your job *after* the War—*buy War Bonds now!*

Let's all KEEP BACKING THE ATTACK!

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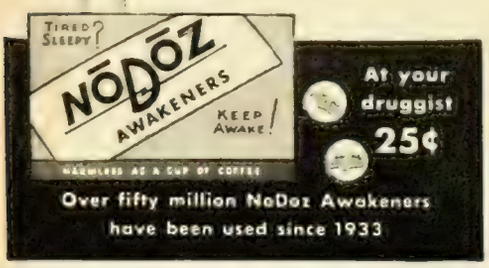

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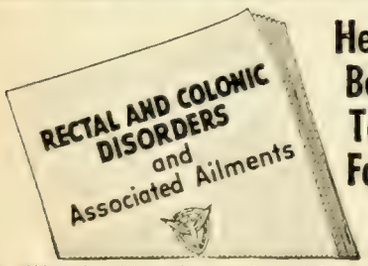

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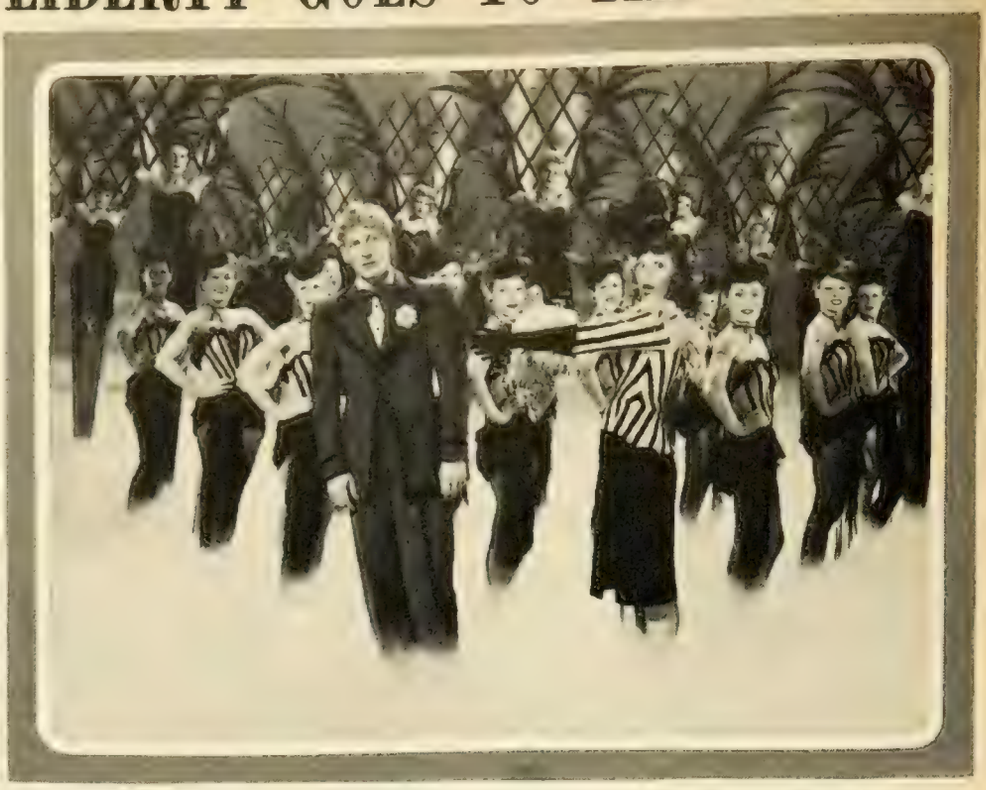
LIBERTY GOES TO THE MOVIES

Danny Kaye, Dinah Shore, and the Goldwyn Girls in the big jive number.

UP IN ARMS *(RKO)*

Danny Kaye, Dinah Shore, Dana Andrews, Constance Dowling

WITHOUT the hilarious monkeyshines of Danny Kaye, Up in Arms would be just another big, gay Technicolor musical comedy—loaded to the gunwales with curvaceous girls, lavish sets, and eye-filling costumes. *With* Danny Kaye, it's a joy forever, because it's his show from beginning to end. Dinah Shore does grab the spotlight whenever she sings, but the rest of the cast merely supports the Great Man.

The plot, for a musical, is surprisingly good—mostly because it never interferes with the fun. Kaye plays the part of a hypochondriac who looks like solid 1-A material to his draft board. "They can't take me!" shouts Kaye when he and his pal (Dana Andrews) are drafted. But he finds some consolation in the fact that two nurses he knew in civilian life (Dinah Shore and Constance Dowling) are now Army nurses stationed at the same embarkation camp, waiting to be sent overseas.

There's a lot of high confusion when Constance Dowling stows away on the transport that is taking the rest of the crowd to the South Pacific, and Kaye pulls every trick out of his bag in his attempts to keep her hidden. (You might think one nurse more or less would never be noticed on a transport—but these nurses happen to be the luscious Goldwyn Girls, who rate a second look any time.)

Eventually the boys and girls land on a mythical Pacific island, and—in an abrupt low-comedy finish that might have come right out of Mack Sennett—Kaye becomes a hero by capturing twenty Japs singlehanded.

Kaye has three special song numbers—Manic-Depressive Pictures Presents, a satire on movie clichés, which he sings in the lobby of the Radio City Music Hall; Melody in 4-F, the story of a draftee in double-talk which he made famous in the Broadway musical, Let's Face It; and a jive duet with Dinah Shore. Both of Miss Shore's solos—Now I Know, and Tess' Torch Song—undoubtedly are headed for the hit parade.

Up in Arms is Danny Kaye's first Hollywood assignment, and thus his first chance to display his expert mugging to the public at large. Previously only New York theatergoers were reduced to helpless laughter by his antics; the rest of the nation had to be content with phonograph records. But after you see Up in Arms you'll probably agree that Kaye is the first really original comedian to hit Hollywood since Bob Hope. His unique double-talk, his gift for mimicry, plus his top-notch material (most of which is supplied by his wife, Sylvia Fine) start him right off on the top rung of the ladder.

PICTURES WORTH SEEING

IN OUR TIME (Warners). Ida Lupino, Paul Henreid, Nazimova. Drama.
JANE EYRE (20th Cent.-Fox). Joan Fontaine, Orson Welles. Drama.
LIFEBOAT (20th Cent.-Fox). Tallulah Bankhead, Walter Slezak, William Bendix. Drama.
LOST ANGEL (M-G-M). Margaret O'Brien, James Craig, Marsha Hunt. Drama.
MADAME CURIE (M-G-M). Walter Pidgeon, Greer Garson. Drama.
NONE SHALL ESCAPE (Columbia). Marsha Hunt, Henry Travers. Drama.
SONG OF BERNADETTE (20th Cent.-Fox). Jennifer Jones, Charles Bickford. Drama.
TENDER COMRADE (RKO). Ginger Rogers, Ruth Hussey, Robert Ryan. Drama.
THE SULLIVANS (20th Cent.-Fox). Anne Baxter, Thomas Mitchell, Selena Royle. Drama.
THE UNINVITED (Paramount). Ruth Hussey, Ray Milland. Mystery drama.

DESPITE its arresting locale, the strenuous dramatic efforts of Jean Gabin and an able supporting cast, The Impostor is a slow, preachy, and sometimes dull movie. The film opens in France, in June, 1940. A murderer (Gabin) escapes from prison during an air raid and robs a dead soldier of his papers and uniform. For selfish—not patriotic—reasons he joins a group of Frenchmen headed for Africa and de Gaulle's forces. The men are ordered to build an airfield in the steaming jungle. Their leader is a young lieutenant (Richard Whorf), but in time the erstwhile murderer falls in love with France's cause, as the other men have, and becomes the real leader. Even when his true identity is revealed, his men stick with him through the blistering desert campaigns until death overtakes most of them. Allyn Joslyn, John Qualen, and Eddie Quillan are excellent as the other Frenchmen. The Impostor is a good picture—but it could have been great. (Universal.)

ESCAPE TO DANGER is a sure-fire escape from boredom. A new twist has been given to the threadbare plot of espionage in wartime. This time the attention is centered on those Englishmen who have turned traitor. The movie opens in Denmark, where an English girl, Joan Grahame (Ann Dvorak) is working hand in glove with the Nazis in order to do some spying for the Allies. The Germans send her to England to find out where the English are concentrating their invasion barges. Her ship is torpedoed and a British convoy picks her up, along with another survivor—an Englishman, Anthony Laurence (Eric Portman)—and takes them to England. Once there, Joan carries on her double-barreled espionage, but despite her attempts at secrecy, the Englishman picks up her trail and pursues her relentlessly. From here on, the international fireworks really pop. For most of the picture you won't really know who is fighting on our side and who isn't, which heightens the suspense considerably.

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CITY ZONE STATE

(*Continued from page 69*)

learn how we do it. American metallurgy is far and away ahead of any other in the world. We can make many things that nobody else can make at all. We can make everything that anybody else can make. And in the great majority of cases we make it much better.

This does not mean that we shall even attempt to dominate world markets for all types of steel when the war is done. Faced with necessity, we have produced cutting and grinding steels to compare favorably with the finest metals that ever came out of Sheffield or Sweden. But in peacetime we perhaps could not compete in price with Sheffield and Swedish surgical steels or watch-spring steels. With lower wages to pay, they can sell such things cheaper in the world market than we may hope to. Their native ores are better suited to the job. We have to process our ores through several additional and costly stages to make those particular things.

AS for devotion to the job:

A certain American company produces a type of steel for ball bearings which our allies cannot produce for themselves. The company cooks the alloy, then has it processed elsewhere, and ships it to England in the form of coiled wire.

During the height of the North African campaign a tank manufacturer in England got news one day that the freighter bringing his shipment of this steel from America had been torpedoed a few hours before reaching the British coast.

The man got on the trans-Atlantic telephone and told the American steelmakers that unless he got another shipment of the stuff within four days he would have to stop his tank-production line for lack of ball bearings in the running gear. And Montgomery needed those tanks—now!

The next morning, the ingots of the special steel were poured into an electric furnace in Michigan. They were then rolled into thick rods. Overnight an express truck with a relay of drivers took the rods to a factory in New England. There they were drawn into wire and rushed by a second truck to a neighboring plant, where they received a series of essential heat treatments. As soon as they were cool they were loaded into a bomber. And the bomber reached its destination in England in ample time to keep the tank assembly line rolling.

Certainly the men and women who actually make the steel in the roaring mills have played their own extraordinary part in this extraordinary drama. In 1939 the industry employed 483,000 people. Now, four years later, 625,000 people make steel. And this despite the fact that 165,000 steelmakers have been drawn into military service by the draft. Of the new steel workers, 37,000 are women actually employed in the mills—rolling and pouring and mixing the molten stuff.

Another 27,000 women work in the offices and the laboratories.

And what kind of a living does steel afford all these people? According to figures for September, 1943, the last available wage-earning employees in the steel industry received an average of $52.55 per week, including overtime, as compared with $33.95 in January, 1941.

Yet, despite the industry's enormous expansion, the increased wages, the higher prices for raw materials, and the inevitable costliness of production under war pressure, the average price of steel in this country has not increased in more than three years. Sheet steel is still selling at a fraction over two cents a pound.

Despite sporadic strikes, labor-management relations in steel are generally good. How else would these workers operate 242 mammoth blast furnaces and 1,200 steel-melting furnaces of a dozen types, twenty-four hours a day, to produce nearly 100 per cent of the theoretical capacity of our whole steel industry?

In all the history of steel, that is unheard-of production.

THE national economy as a whole will benefit from this swift and efficient expansion of our greatest industry. When the war is done, there will be no sudden cessation of the need for steel. A wrecked and half-ruined Europe must be rebuilt. The American automobile industry, the household appliance industry will be crying for steel. Railroad tracks and cars, worn out by their duties in war, must be replaced.

We can use the world's greatest steel industry, all right, when peace comes. And we may thank our lucky stars that we shall have it.

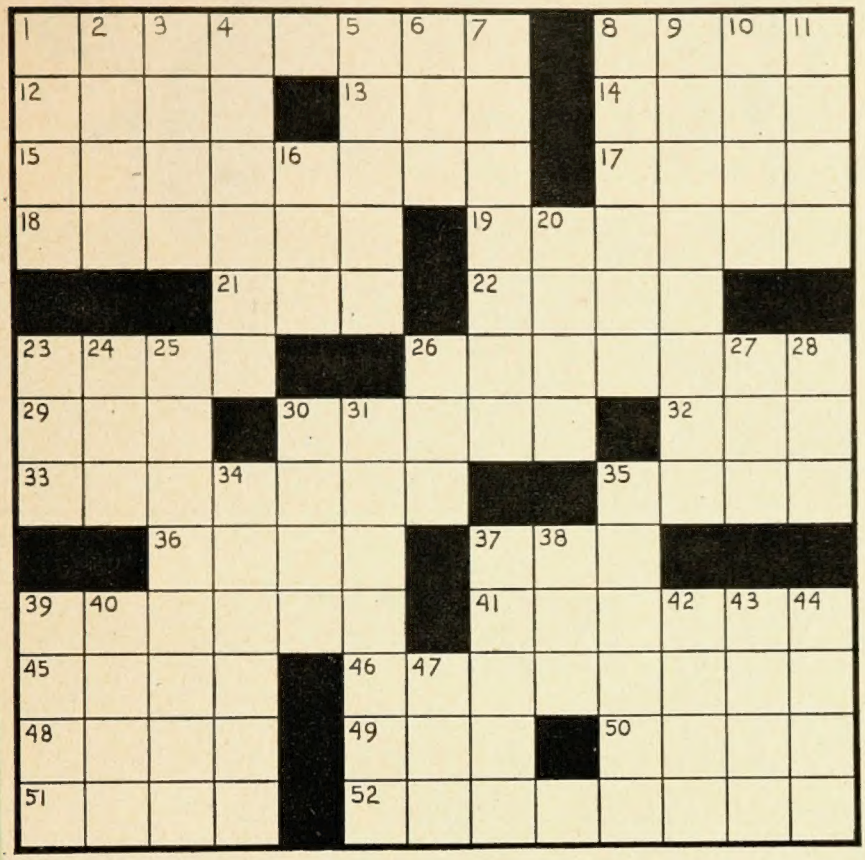
THE END

THE HOME FRONT

"Joe, I want you to meet the little woman."

QUIZZ-ICAL CROSSWORD

BY TED SHANE



HORIZONTAL

1 What's current slang for a tall glamour girl?
8 What dog has a purple tongue?
12 Who can be assister and brother too?
13 Mrs. Lamb
14 Who had pink eyes and wore gloves and a watch in Alice in Wonderland?
15 What part of the Constitution begins "We the People of the United States"?
17 Who was the world's most hedonistic poet?
18 Which Margaret is leading exponent of birth control?
19 What's French for devil?
21 Complete: --- Bitta Pi
22 Two prepositions in one
23 What would you call a beastly imitator?
26 It's said it takes an actress of 35 to play the role of a what?
29 What's slang for Queen of the Flattops?
30 The K9 7-year itch is called what?
32 It takes several ages to make one what?
33 The Army uses what to feel out enemy weaknesses? (pl.)
35 With what sound do you summon a waiter in Cuba?
36 Who calls Orson lovey-dovey dream boy?
37 And what do you do to make a lovey dovey dream talk?
39 What are the holiest household items?
41 What have become very popular places visited by men on furlough?

Last week's answer

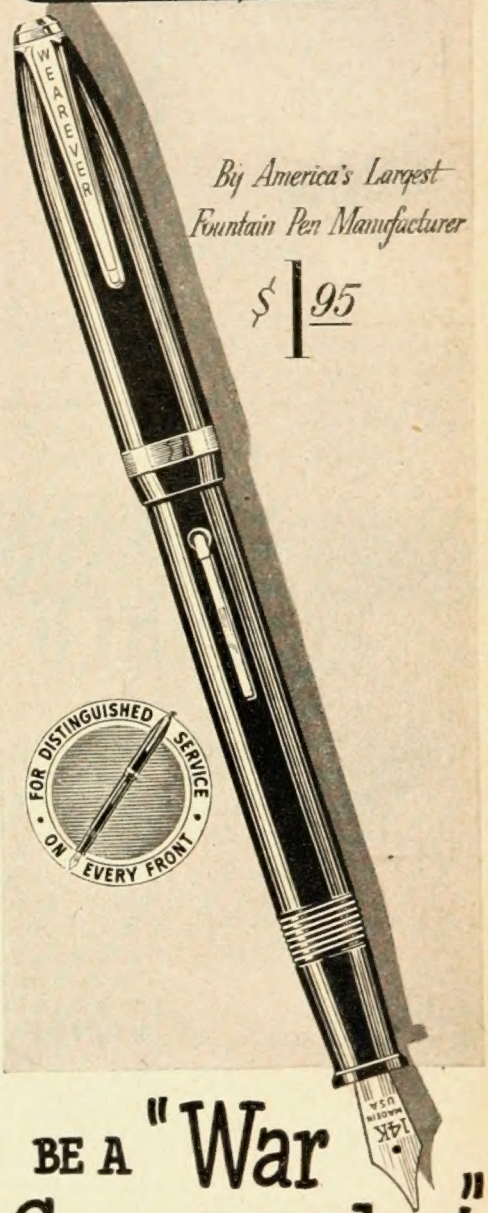
45 In what institution was social security really first invented?
46 In what kind of court do prisoners hold trials of other prisoners?
48 What did Caesar call a road to Rome?
49 Thinkers think a lot before they do what?
50 What's the Norwegian equivalent of "Here's mud in your eye"?
51 What's another poker term for "I'll bye"?
52 A church novice is called a what?

VERTICAL

1 What lapses can't you sit down on?
2 What denomination of occupation money printed by ourselves are we now using in Europe?
3 Middle East gulf
4 Sparse
5 What's a Sing Sing jackass?
6 What's an eagle with a Ph. D?
7 Wanting
8 Name a famous Eastern American prep school?
9 What're pig femurs? (2 wds.)
10 The less brainy a Congressman is, the more what is he likely to be?
11 What kind of wolf would you say is a has-been?
16 Got together
20 Who is the Great British religious pessimist and critic?
23 Carnera was the Ambling what?
24 What vegetable was used to detect true royalty in a fairy tale?
25 Moderate people never go to whats?
26 The Dems may be said to be the whats?
27 Underprivileged Republican Statesmen (abbr.)
28 Stow in the sustenance
30 What's a small thing that dances in sunbeams?
31 Name some American who doesn't live in one of the United States
34 The Bug, Lena and Neva are all whats?
35 Who was Perlmutter's alkaline partner?
37 A hunk of many verses is called a what?
38 What three letters with "v" and "a" make a famous river?
39 Besides a movie, the Sullivans is also the name of a what?
40 Name a tiny Greek letter
42 What's the nickname of National League ballplayer Vaughn?
43 What vegetable type is the beet?
44 What fish is allegedly tough as leather?
47 A service a tennis player cannot return is called a what?

The answer to this puzzle will appear in next week's issue.

WEAREVER
Zenith



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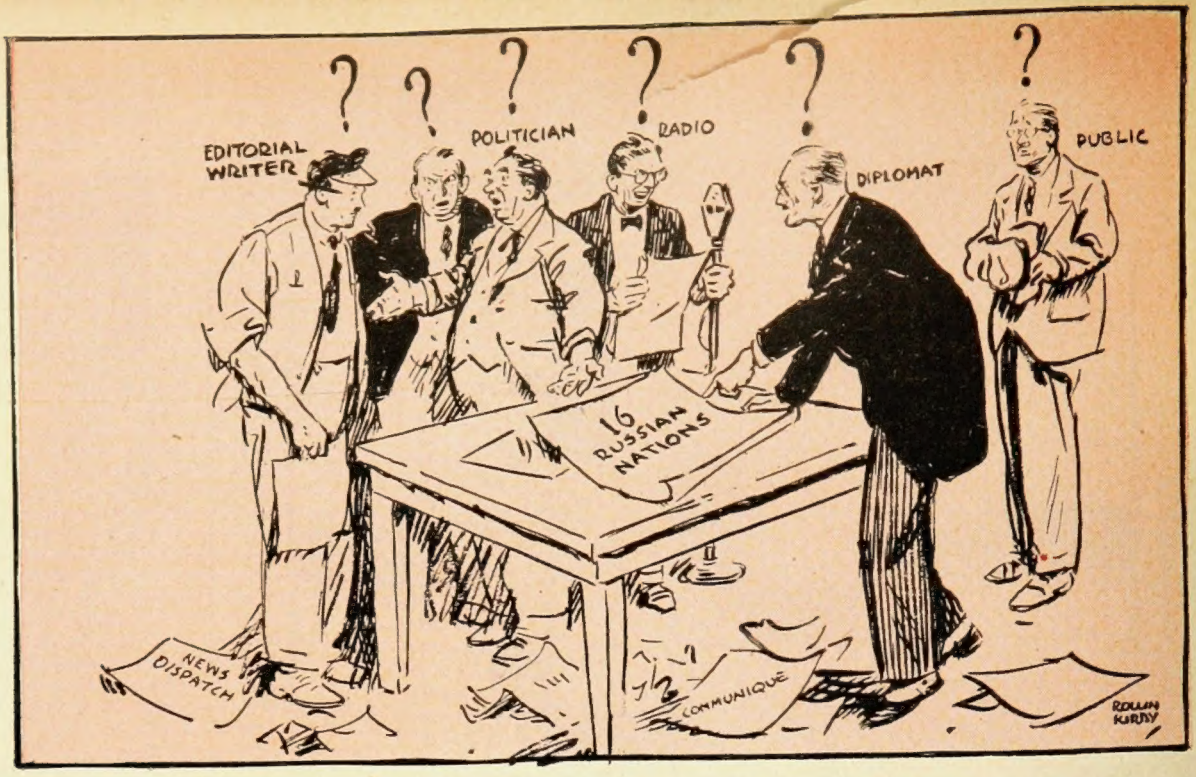

SIXTEEN MEN ON THE WORLD CHESSBOARD

THE triple-ply thinkers of the country have had a field day guessing the meaning of Russia's move in breaking herself up into sixteen separate states. So why shouldn't we have a shot at it, too?

All this speculation would be ended, of course, if the Russians would tell us exactly what it does mean, but up to the present writing they have not chosen to do so.

However, in analyzing this move we might try proceeding from the simple elements of the situation. What does Russia really want for herself after the war? Certainly, assurance she will not have to fight again in the foreseeable future. Only peoples who think themselves a master race, who are essentially predatory, or who labor under actual gross injustice want to go to war. Russia conforms to none of these definitions. She has a tremendous job to do rebuilding her country and developing her great untapped resources. There is no reason for her to cast covetous eyes on her neighbors' possessions. The one-time Bolshevik idea of Sovietizing the world by force of arms was thrown out with Trotsky.

So, common sense indicates the primary aim of Russia is to assure peace for years. The only way it can be done is by setting up an international organization with the power to enforce international law.

Failing this, Russia wants a padding of territory around her vital centers so that the next war, when it comes, will not start, as this one did, right in her living room.

The Russians are perhaps simple souls and not the tricky international poker players some folks think. If we could forget our habit of looking for tricky reasons behind their every move, we might find that the latest one makes sense as a direct effort to bolster the chances for a long period of peaceful development.

Every proposal for an international organization to prevent war runs against the snag of national sovereignties. Obviously, if such an organization is to work, nations must agree on a set of international laws and willingly subordinate their individual sovereignties to these laws to the extent necessary. Though all nations proclaim their interest in international organization for peace, each insists upon the retention of full sovereign rights. From her experience with the League of Nations, Russia knows this won't work. Therefore, while other nations say it's impossible to give up any sovereign rights, maybe Russia is saying, "Why not?" —and setting up a working model to prove it can be done.

If this working model doesn't work, or if the example is wasted, Russia's new structure then becomes a handy device for taking in the buffer territories needed to keep the inevitable future war away from her vital centers.

This may not be the true explanation of the Russian move, but at least it is a new angle. We've done so much seeking for dark gentlemen in the woodpile, it might be well, for a change, to look for honest motives rather than devious ones. We owe it to all our allies to be ready to trust before we suspect. This latest Russian move is perhaps a sincere effort to pioneer the way to a workable and effective international organization.

Paul Hunter

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